A ROW-PETERSON PLAY

Louisa May Alcott's

Jos Boys



ALMA JOHNSON

University of Florida Libraries



The Gift of Alma Johnson Sarrett

Set.

nts.

poppub-

west.

RE



5 M. 8 W. 1 Set.

Books, 75 Cents.

A gay, fast-paced farce-comedy. Tops in entertainment.

Royalty on request.

ROW, PETERSON & COMPANY

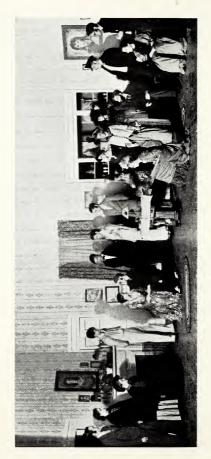
Evanston, Illinois

NEW YORK

5

LOS ANGELES

Digitized by the Internet Archive in 2012 with funding from LYRASIS Members and Sloan Foundation



A variation of the basic stage setting of the play, as used at Sarasota (Florida) High School

JO'S BOYS

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

Adapted from Louisa May Alcott's story of the same title, by special arrangement with the trustees of the Alcott estate

By -- 40-17288

ALMA JOHNSON

Department of Speech Florida Southern College

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CAUTION: Amateurs are hereby warned that "Jo's Boys" is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and including all countries of the Copyright Union. This play is subject to royalty, and anyone presenting the play without the consent of the publishers will be liable to the penalties of the law this play without first securing permission and terms in writing from the publishers.

WARNING

by hand or by any process, is an infringement of the copyright. The copying, or duplication of this work or any part of this work and will be prosecuted.

ROW, PETERSON & COMPANY EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

NEW YORK

SAN FRANCISCO

JO'S BOYS

All Rights Reserved
Copyright, 1940, by
Row, Peterson and Company

1498

Especial notice should be taken that the possession of this book, without a valid contract for production first having been obtained from the publishers, confers no right or license to professionals or amateurs to produce the play publicly or in private for gain or charity.

In its present form this play is dedicated to the reading public only, and no performance, representation, production, recitation, public reading, or radio broadcasting may be given except by special arrangement with Row, Peterson and Company, at 1911 Ridge Avenue, Evanston, Illinois, or at 131 E. 23rd Street, New York City.

On application to Row, Peterson and Company, at either of the addresses listed in the paragraph above, royalty will be quoted for use of the play by amateurs.

Whenever the play is produced, the following notice must appear on all programs, printing, and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Row, Peterson and Company, Evanston and New York."

Attention is called to the penalty provided by law for any infringement of the author's rights, as follows:

"Section 4966:—Any person publicly performing or representing any dramatic or musical composition for which copyright has been obtained, without the consent of the proprietor of said dramatic or musical composition, or his heirs or assigns, shall be liable for damages thereof, such damages in all cases to be assessed at such sum, not less than one hundred dollars for the first and fifty dollars for every subsequent performance, as to the court shall appear to be just. If the unlawful performance and representation be willful and for profit, such person or persons shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be imprisoned for a period not exceeding one year."—U. S. Revised Statutes: Title 60, Chap. 3.

Seventy-five Cents per Copy, Postpaid

Printed in the United States of America

CONTENTS



FOREWORD

HAT happened to them afterward? How did they turn out? Did they all live happily ever after?

It was in answer to a barrage of such questions from her readers that Miss Alcott wrote Jo's Boys, the book upon which this play is based. For to thousands, young and old, the "Little Women" had become real persons: Jo, the tomboy who had finally settled down at Plumfield, with Professor Bhaer as her helpmeet, to run a school for homeless boys and girls; Meg, who had established her own small kingdom with John Brooke as her Prince Consort, and the twins, Daisy and Demi, and little Josie as loyal subjects; gentle Beth, whose death brought the one great sorrow to the March family; and elegant Amy, who found both love and riches in marrying Laurie, the boy next door.

The years have brought changes when our story begins. The school at Plumfield has become a college, with Professor Bhaer as the president. Jo has achieved considerable fame with her "scribbling," as she chose to call it. Meg has been left a widow, and her Daisy is abroad with the young violinist she married. The girls' beloved "Marmee" and their father have gone on to join little Beth.

Although Jo's protégés are scattered about the world, we meet some of them back at Plumfield: Nan, who is studying medicine at the college; Emil, the sailor, home on leave; and Dan, whose wanderings bring him sometimes to this the only home he has ever known. Then there are also Teddy, the son of Jo and the Professor; Demi, Meg's son, and her youngest daughter, Josie; and Bess, the "Princess," the daughter of Amy and Laurie.

It is at Plumfield that we renew our acquaintance with the "Little Women" and their loved ones, at Plumfield that we find out "what happened to them afterward."

-ALMA JOHNSON.

The Plot in Brief

HOSE who have come to know the "Little Women"-and who has not?-could hardly forget those irresistible sisters-Meg, the volatile Jo, and Amy with her elegant airs.

Picture them now, some twenty years later, as they are gathered together in Jo's living room at Plumfield. Jo has inherited Plumfield from Aunt March, and now has her share of contentment in the small fame she has earned with her "scribblings, as she calls them, a loving husband and son, Teddy, besides all the other boys and girls she has in a sense adopted almost as her own during the years she and Professor Bhaer have had their school at Plumfield. It is to Plumfield they all return for sympathy and understanding and to share their secrets.

There is Josie, Meg's younger daughter, who cherishes a desire to be a great actress. Hardly has the play begun when Josie bursts in in hot pursuit of Teddy, who has stolen her book. Teddy takes great delight in taunting and mimicking Josie in her Thespian efforts at Shakespeare; and though Josie takes her acting oh, so seriously, she cannot help but laugh in appreciation of Teddy's amusing antics, as do all

the rest.

There is Nan, who is studying to become a doctor. She is thoroughly in favor of the right of independence for women. On the other hand, Demi, Meg's son and a journalist, believes that the place for a pretty girl is in the home, and he wants it to be his home for Nan. Persistent though he is at devising ways and means to gain her attention, Nan will not be romantic. Once, with Josie's help, Demi almost wins Nan's heart, but Nan regrets it all too soon, and it remains for Jo to suggest the way of setting them both on the right track again.

Then there is Emil, an orphaned nephew of Professor Bhaer, who has chosen the life of a sailor. When he arrives home on leave, it is like a breath of salt sea air. He comes, laden with gifts for everyone, and all gather around to welcome him with sincere joy and affection. Josie, his "little cockboat," as he has always called her, is suddenly smitten with a combination of shyness and woman's wiles, and Emil is sur-

prised to find that, in his absence, she has grown up.

They are all about to gather around the piano to express their joy at having Emil back with them again for a while, when they receive news that Dan, another of Jo's boys, has been injured in a mine accident. Laurie is dispatched at once to bring Dan

back to Plumfield.

To Dan, rough in his ways and a pioneer at heart, Amy's daughter, Bess, becomes a sort of shining star-something toward which he will always reach up, but never touch. Even Bess does not know Dan's feeling for her, though Jo does; and it is with her understanding of what is right for all of them that Jo sends Dan on his way with only a dream to cherish, leaving Bess to her music and art and the life for which she is best suited.

In the meantime, Josie, who has counted so much on the opinion of Miss Cameron, a famous actress, to start her career in the theatre, is told by Miss Cameron that she had better learn to keep house. Then, at last, Emil and Josie cease to talk at cross

purposes, and find their own happiness in each other.

And so it is that Jo, with all her tasks of making a home for her husband and son, finding time to write, and enjoying the consequent fame-which to a great extent resolves itself into artists sketching on her lawn and memento-seekers knocking at her door-Jo still finds time to watch over the careers and hearts of her young people; and it is with a sense of satisfaction that we see them started on the paths of their own individual destinies, and we hear Jo express her contentment with the final words, "May joy like this be ours forever!"

JO'S BOYS

CHARACTERS

THE "LITTLE WOMEN"

Jo, now the wife of Professor Bhaer, and a well-known writer, about forty

Meg, the widow of John Brooke, a year older than Jo Amy, now married to Laurie, thirty-seven

"Jo's Boys"

Teddy, her own son, about seventeen Demi, Meg's son, in his early twenties Emil, an orphaned nephew of the Professor, twenty-three

Dan, whom Jo took in at Plumfield as a homeless waif, in his early twenties

THE OTHERS

Professor Bhaer, now President of Plumfield College, somewhat older than Jo

Laurie, about forty

Josie, Meg's daughter, about eighteen

Nan, whom Jo has brought up at Plumfield, in her early twenties

Bess, the daughter of Amy and Laurie, eighteen Mrs. Erastus Kingsbury Parmalee, of Oshkosh Esmeralda, Mrs. Parmalee's elder daughter Annabella, her younger daughter

SYNOPSIS

The action takes place in the downstairs sitting-room of the old house at Plumfield, the estate left to Jo by Aunt March.

ACT I: A spring day, in the year 1881.

ACT II, SCENE 1: Morning, three weeks later.

SCENE 2: A week later, the night of the Commence-

ACT III: Morning, two weeks later.

The following is a re-print of the house program used at a test production of JO'S BOYS, at Sarasota (Florida) High School, by the Dramateers, under the direction of Mr. Donald McQueen, in collaboration with Miss Alma Johnson.

Sarasota High School Dramateers

Present

Louisa May Alcott's

JO'S BOYS

Dramatization by Alma Johnson Directed by Donald McQueen

CAST

Jo	Joyce Ross
MEG	
Аму	Lena Sandstrom
LAURIE	David Lynn
Josie	Annette Levy
TEDDY	Otho Watford
Nan	Sue Mize
Demi	Dick McDermott
BESS	Birgetta Belgau
EMIL	Forrest Olsen
PROFESSOR BHAER	Leighton Young
DAN	
MRS. ERASTUS KINGSBURY PARMALEE	Evelyn Poole
ANNABELLA	
ESMERALDA	
***************************************	Intervention

PRODUCTION STAFF

STUDENT ASSISTANT Althea Bush
SOUND EFFECTS Janice Matisse
LIGHTS John Ingram
STAGE MANAGER
SCENERY Mildred Camburn
PROPERTIES
TICKETS Amy Routier
COSTUMES Norma Yentner, Ellen Boggs
USHERS Ellen Bretschneider

Assisted by Miss Mary Frank Sears and other members of the High School Faculty

JO'S BOYS

This is a royalty play. Do not make arrangements to produce it without first getting permission from the publishers. It is dishonest and illegal to copy parts.

Act I

The time is 1881, in the late spring. The action takes place in the downstairs sitting-room of the old house at Plumfield, the estate left to JO by Aunt March. Much of the furniture in the room is early Victorian, the same used by Aunt March years before, but there are a few more nearly up-to-date pieces. About the room is an atmosphere of friendliness.

There is a wide fireplace at the R. In front of it is a low-backed divan or sofa, and farther downstage, an easy chair and hassock. Upstage from the fireplace is a small desk with two tiers of bookshelves above it. D.R. is a door leading to the study.

U.C. are French doors leading to the garden, glimpses of which may be seen through the glass panels of the doors and through the windows on either side in the back wall. Beneath each window is a cushioned seat, covered and flounced with gayly colored chintz. There are cutains, which may be drawn together, on the doors and windows.

U.L. is an archway or door leading to the entrance hall, and thence to the street, the ballroom, and the second floor of the house. Through the arch, one may see the foot of a stairway and a hall-tree. If the hallway is impossible, business which takes place in the hall may be brought into the room. Downstage from this arch is a small spinet piano, conceivably the one belonging to Beth in Little Women. Above the piano is a portrait of Beth as she appeared before her final illness—rosy-cheeked, with smooth brown hair and a shy, gentle

smile. Over the mantelpiece on the other side of the room is a portrait of Marmee, the mother of Little Women.

D.L. of C. is a heavy round table. On it are a kerosene lamp, a sewing-basket, and some newspapers and books. Three chairs are placed around it. D.L. is the door leading to the kitchen.

When the play begins, JO, MEG, and AMY are sitting, talking together. JO is lounging on the sofa in a none-too-sedate posture for her forty years and her reputation as a writer. She has a basket of varicolored socks which she attacks vigorously, but spasmodically. She is as brown and lean as when she was a girl, but maturity and rich experiences have mellowed the sharpness of her features. There are a few streaks of gray in her dark hair. She is, as always, plainly dressed.

MEG is plump and matronly. She wears a little lace cap on her brown hair and a frill at her throat. She sits in the easy chair D.R., and works daintily at a piece of embroidery.

AMY is sitting beside the table D.L. She has a piece of drawing paper fastened to a small drawing-board, and a pencil with which she makes swift, sure strokes as she talks with her sisters. She stops occasionally to look intently at Jo, who is her present model. AMY has grown heautiful with the years, and her childish efforts at elegance have led to a mature charm and grace. She is stylishly dressed, with all the flounces—and of course the bustle—of the period.

As the curtain rises, Jo is surveying the hopelessness of a large gray sock, MEG is knotting a new thread, and AMY is studying Jo's face, with her pencil poised in the air. Just as we expect, it is Jo who breaks the silence.

Jo. Can you believe it's only a few weeks till Commencement—and summer vacation?

Meg. It seems as if each year goes more swiftly than the last.

Why, it seems only yesterday that Plumfield College was founded. Wonderful changes have taken place here in the last ten years.

Amy. I sometimes wonder how Aunt March would like the idea of a college overrunning her fine old estate.

Jo. (Chuckling.) She'd probably pretend to be furious, but in her heart she'd be pleased. Dear crotchety old soul! When we first established our home and school for poor youngsters, I used to imagine Aunt March's ghost chasing boys out of apple trees and jumping out of linen closets to scold rowdy tomboys! And I can still hear her calling (imitating Aunt March's shrill, querulous voice) "Josy-phine! Josy-phine!"

Amy. Poor, dear old lady!

Meg. It's hard to believe that all your adopted boys and girls are now grown up, Jo—and our own no longer children, either.

Amy. When we were little girls at home, we used to believe in fairies, remember? And we'd plan what we'd ask for if we could have three wishes. It seems as if most of our wishes have been granted, doesn't it? I have all the money I ever wanted for luxuries, a little success in my drawing, a beautiful home near each of my dear sisters, and the nicest husband and daughter in the world.

Jo. (Rumpling her hair as she clasps her hands over her head.) Well, I have plenty of the work I love to do, a little fame in my scribbling, this dear old house to live in, plenty of boys to worry about—even though only one of 'em is really my own—and, if not plenty of money, at least I never go hungry as we sometimes did when we were girls.

Meg. I have had my wishes, too, and am quite content in my little cottage over the hill. . . . If all our dear ones were still with us, it would be quite perfect.

Amy. They are still with us. Never does a problem arise, but in my mind I hear Marmee's voice counseling me.

(JO drops her ball of darning thread and gets up to retrieve it. She stops in front of the fireplace to gaze up at the por-

trait above the mantelpiece—standing in her old tomboyish way, feet a little too far apart, her hands folded behind her.)

Jo. This portrait helps to keep her with me. You did it splendidly, Amy . . . and Meg looks more like her every day.

Amy. If you don't sit down and keep still, Jo, this portrait won't look much like you, I'm afraid.

(Jo amiably resumes her seat and poses with one sock held aloft.)

Jo. How's this? Belligerent Feminist in Domestic Scene. Think that would please my public?

(They laugh together. There is a moment of silence.)

Meg. I only wish I had Marmee's patience and wisdom. Then I should know how to handle Josie. I don't know what I shall do with that child of mine!

Jo. She isn't really a child any more, Meg. She is past seventeen now, you know. And she gets her theatrical talent directly from her mother—don't forget that!

Meg. (In horror and shame.) But she wants to go on the stage!

Amy. She will get over that in time, Meg.

Jo. What if she doesn't! There have been worse things than acting and worse people than actors and actresses. Talents are not given to one without reason, you know.

Amy. That is what Laurie says when he wants our Bess to give more time to her music.

Jo. Poor little Bess! Her father determined to make her a great pianist, her mother set on her being a sculptress! It is fortunate that she is really talented in both.

Amy. Or unfortunate! Now, if all her genius were in art ...

(The other two laugh at her, and she joins in.)

Meg. Josie is already so excited about the play for Commencement that she doesn't sleep or eat. She says that Charlotte Cameron, the famous actress, has promised to come and see it.

Amy. Yes, she has. Laurie saw her when he was in Boston last week. She is much interested in amateur theatricals.

Meg. Charlotte Cameron may be a very fine person, but I don't want my daughter to be an actress! I want her to become a respecta-

ble, dignified, modest wife and-

(She is interrupted by shrieks of LAUGHTER offstage L. TEDDY rushes in through the arch U.L., followed by JOSIE in hot pursuit. He has a book in his hand, which he holds just out of her reach. He is a tall, gangling boy with wild yellow hair. JOSIE's dark curly hair has fallen over her face and shoulders, and her hat is hanging at her back. Her dark little face is pretty and very expressive, and there is about her a winsome charm and vitality. Just now her appearance is a bit disheveled from the chase through meadow and brook and briars.)

Jo. (Laughing as they appear.) Especially dignified!

Meg. Josie! Where in the world have you been? What are you doing?

Josie. Ted has my book, and I will have it! Hold him for me, Aunt Jo!

(TED has dodged behind the sofa and now makes a dash toward escape, but too late, for JO collars him.)

Jo. What have you to say for yourself, thief?

Teddy. Let me go, Mother-quick!

Josie. Ted and I went fishing, and I got tired and was studying my part in the willow tree, and Ted came up and poked the book out of my hands with his fishing rod. It fell in the brook, and before I could scramble down, he was off with it. You wretch, give it back this moment, or I'll box your ears!

(She advances threateningly.)

Meg. Josie! You've torn your dress!

Josie. (Unperturbed.) Yes, Mother.

(Jo turns TEDDY over to JOSIE'S tender mercies, but he

ducks from her vengeful arms and darts over to D.L., where he holds the book at arm's length, and, assuming a mock dramatic pose, pretends to be reading JOSIE'S lines from the play. JOSIE halts in her descent upon him, for he really is funny, and she can't resist a laugh.)

Teddy. (Going, with comical effect, from the extremely melodramatic to the extremely casual in one breath.) Ah, my heart, how canst thou betray me thus? I shall be brave; I must be strong! I shall see him no more—I will see him no more! Come, all ye protectors of faint maidenly hearts—gird round me bands of iron to hold me to my duty! But ah, me! Ah, ah, ah, me! Such woe! Such woe!

(He suddenly ends by distorting his face horribly and tying his long legs into knots.)

Dost like the picture, love?

(The others laugh, and TEDDY quickly extricates himself from the knots to bow low several times, as if responding to insistent curtain calls.)

Jo. You two are a team, and it takes a strong hand to drive you, but I rather like trying it. Josie ought to have been my daughter instead of yours, Meg. Then your house would have been all peace and mine all bedlam.

Josie. (Bearing down on the culprit again.) Now, will you relinquish the book, sir?

Teddy. Your book? . . . Of course, my good woman, of course! Your book—allow me!

(And he presents it to her with a grandiloquent bow. She curtsies as she takes it, then quickly gives his nose a tweak and runs to the window seat U.L., where she curls up to study her part. During the ensuing conversation, she may be seen gesturing and grimacing as she goes through the lines. TEDDY saunters over to AMY and looks at the sketch she is making.)

That's a jolly good likeness of Mrs. Josephine Bhaer, the noted authoress, Aunt Amy.

Meg. What a ridiculous way in which to refer to your own mother, Teddy!

Teddy. Well, she is Mrs. Josephine Bhaer, and she is a famous authoress. . . . By the by, does Demi have an article in this week's paper, Aunt Meg? They don't sign 'em any more, so I couldn't tell.

(He picks up from the table a four-page newspaper of the

period.)

Meg. (With evident disapproval.) He wrote that article telling about those newfangled machines they use to print with in some of the offices—typewriters, they call 'em. And the one about Emmaline Hopkins and those other awful women trying to vote in the state elections.

Jo. I don't think they're awful, Meg. Women should be given the right to vote.

Teddy. Nan says she's going to vote soon as she's twenty-one—even if they put her in jail!

Meg. Nan is a very bold and independent young woman.

Jo. She's a very capable young woman.

Meg. Well, anyway, I wish my Demi would get over his infatuation for her. And I wish, too, that he'd give up that horrible newspaper business.

Teddy. Well, I don't. I think it's jolly. Maybe he'll be a famous writer like the mater some day. And Nan will be a great doctor and everything will be jolly.

(He takes the paper with him to the other window seat, U.R., where he sprawls to read.)

Meg. (Sighing.) I'm afraid none of my ambitions for my children will bear any fruit. I have so hoped, and even prayed, that Demi would go into the ministry, but nothing seems further from his mind. And of course Iosie . . .

(She breaks off in another plaintive sigh as she looks in the direction of the stage-struck JOSIE.)

Jo. We cannot drive our children, but must remember that experience is the best teacher. Though it's often hard, especially when we see all our own faults and whims and weaknesses in our offspring (glancing back at TeDDY, who looks up to give ber an appreciative wink and grin) as I do in my Teddy—and foresee the hard places we could lift them across if they'd only let us. But they won't—any more than we listened to our elders when we were young.

Amy. That is true. But I'll never bear it if my Bess disappoints me.

Meg. But Bess will never disappoint you, dear. Your every wish is her law.

Jo. Well, my only son thus far is quite satisfactory.

(Another look of understanding passes from Jo to TEDDY.)
And of all the lot my Fritz and I gathered in when we started our school here at Plumfield, not one has greatly disappointed us.

Amy. What about Dan, Jo? He has caused you enough worry, I am sure.

Jo. But Dan has a brave and loyal heart. It's only his impetuous nature that gets him into trouble sometimes. Poor boy! When I remember the sort of life Fritz and I rescued him from when he was a child—ragged, hungry, dirty...

Meg. I never could have taken in all those children and mothered them as you have, Jo.

Jo. I've loved it. And if they are the fine men and women I expect them to be, all my labor will be well repaid.

Teddy. (Looking up from his paper.) But if we all turn out bad, we shall pay a high price for our folly—like the girl in this story.

Jo. (Sharply.) What are you reading, Teddy? Teddy. "The Trial of Mary Weakheart: or The Downfall of Innocence." Virtuous maiden deceived by city crook—but she gets her revenge.

17

Jo. You shouldn't read such—such trash! You know how your father disapproves, Teddy.

Teddy. But it isn't really bad, Mother, just a bit silly. Lots of people like this kind of story.

Amy. We have a new book of stories by that Western writer, Bret Harte, which you'd like, Teddy. Laurie gave it to Bess for her birthday. She'd lend it to you, I'm sure.

Teddy. Thanks, Aunt Amy. I like his tales. Wish I could go West myself. That would be the life for me!

Jo. (Rising.) Would you help me to bring the tea now, Teddy? Of course, that is a weak substitute for Indian fighting, but I do need you.

Teddy. (Grinning as he gets awkardly to his feet.) Of course, Mother.

Amy. May I help, Jo?

Jo. Thanks, everything is ready. Teddy and I can manage. (They go out D.L.)

Meg. Do you know whether Jo has had any more of those fainting spells, Amy? I've worried about her—ever since her illness three summers ago.

Amy. She laughs at any mention of not being well. But I'm sure she needs more rest than she will allow herself.

Meg. Somehow, I have a feeling she is keeping something from us—and from Fritz, as well.

Amy. Oh, you're probably imagining troubles which don't exist, dear. If Jo was really ill, all of us would know it, I'm sure.

Meg. Just the same, I believe that I shall ask-

(She is interrupted by the entrance of NAN, through the arch U.L. She is a healthy, self-possessed young woman, very simply and sensibly dressed. She carries a large leather medicine kit which she sets on the floor beside the piano.)

Nan. Hello, everybody!

Amy. Why, hello, Nan.

Meg. Good afternoon, Nan.

Amy. You're surely looking well, dear.

Nan. (As she seats herself on the piano bench.) Strong as a horse!

Meg. I never can quite get used to such an athletic look about young ladies. When I was a girl, we wanted to look fragile and delicate.

Nan. I'm afraid your lovely swooning invalids went out with hoopskirts, Aunt Meg. In this year of our Lord, 1881, we're developing muscles, so help us!

(She exhibits hers. JO and TEDDY enter from D.L., carrying trays with tea service.)

Jo. Hullo, Doctor Nan! What sort of demonstration is this? Nan. (As she crosses to relieve Jo of the tea tray, which she sets on the table D.L.) Aunt Meg was just deploring my Amazonian strength—and I was boasting of it, I'm afraid.

(TED also places his burden on the table. He and NAN pour tea and hand it to the three older women. Jo resumes her seat on the sofa.)

Meg. There is such a thing as looking too . . . well, too capable of taking care of oneself, my dear. Men like women to be a bit dependent on them.

Nan. But I can take care of myself, so why pretend, just to flatter masculine vanity?

Teddy. Bravo, Doctor! (Then, to AMY, as he hands her a cup of tea.) Sugar, Aunt Amy?

Amy. Yes, please.

Jo. It's quite all right to be independent, Nan, and I'm quite proud of you. I expect you to be a great and successful doctor someday. We need such capable women in this world. I sometimes feel

as if I'd missed my vocation and ought to have remained single. But my duty seemed to point this way (*indicating the basket of socks*), and I don't regret it.

Teddy. (As he hands her a cup of tea.) Neither do I. For where would I be without you?

Nan. (Glancing in the direction of JOSIE, who is still absorbed in her study.) Do you think our young Bernhardt could be enticed long enough for a cup of tea?

(Suddenly JOSIE gives a smothered shriek of terror, and, rising and creeping downstage as if in a trance, delivers Juliet's

speech in the tomb, with real dramatic effect.)

Josie. "What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand? Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end.

O churl! drunk all, and left no friendly drop
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips;
Haply some poison yet doth hang on them,
To make me die with a restorative.
Thy lips are warm! . . .

Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger! This is thy sheath; there rust, and let me die!"

(She has pretended to stab herself through the heart, and now falls convincingly into a graceful heap on the floor. The members of her audience have put down their cups and now applaud enthusiastically. JOSIE sits up and beams with satisfaction.)

Nan. (Shaking her head.) Too much cerebral excitement for one of her age.

Jo. I'm afraid you'll have to make up your mind to it, Meg. That child is a born actress. We never did anything so well ourselves, not even "The Witch's Curse."

Meg. It is a sort of judgment upon me for my passion for the stage when I was a girl. Now I know how dear Marmee felt when I begged to be an actress. I never can consent—and yet I may have to.

Teddy. (Picking JOSIE up with a firm hand.) Don't disgrace your mother, girl!

Josie. (Shaking herself free.) Unhand me, villain, or I'll give you the "Maniac Bride" with my best ha-ha!

(She ends with a villainous laugh.)

Teddy. (Beaming with pride.) Isn't she great fun? I couldn't stop in this dull place if I hadn't that child to make life lively for me! If she ever turns prim, I'm off.

Josie. "Child" indeed! I'd have you remember I'm almost eighteen, and a year your elder, sonny!

(She chucks him under the chin. There is a KNOCK on the door off L., followed by a LOUD WHISTLE.)

Meg. That's Demi; he's come to take me home.

(TED goes to the door to admit DEMI, a fresh-faced, keeneyed young man in his early twenties.)

Teddy. (As he opens the door.) Here's your "Evening Tatler!" Latest edition! Awful murder! Bank clerk absconded! Great strike of the Latin-School boys!

Demi. (Entering with TEDDY, waving the newspaper he carries.) The Commodore is in and will cut his cable and run before the wind as soon as he can get off!

(All are excited and pleased by the news.)

Jo. (Jumping up to take the paper.) You've seen Emil? His ship is in port? (Reading, as JOSIE and TEDDY peer over her shoulder.) "The Brenda arrived in port today from Hamburg—"

Teddy. Hurrah for Commodore Emil!

Jo. Bless the boy! He's been gone almost a year. How happy Fritz will be!

Teddy. Shall I go over to college and fetch him, Mother?

Jo. Yes, do, Teddy. He was talking of Emil only this morning. The boy has always been his favorite nephew.

(TEDDY is already gone, making his exit U.C.)

Josie. (In a very apparent state of nervousness.) When will he be here, Demi? Emil, I mean—when is he coming?

Demi. He'll come lurching in in half an hour or so. I saw him, jolly and tarry and brown as a coffee berry. Had a good run, and hopes to be second mate, as the other fellow is laid up with a broken leg.

(At his first sentence, JOSIE has disappeared through the

arch U.L. and up the stairs.)

Nan. Wish I had the setting of it.

Demi. (Seeing her for the first time.) Oh—hullo, Nan!
Didn't know you were here. . . . Gee, I didn't know you were here!

(We suspect at once just what ailment it is DEMI suffers and for which NAN might prescribe.)

Nan. (Matter-of-factly.) Well, I am.

Jo. Go on and tell us more news. What does Emil report of his brother Franz?

Demi. Why, er—(reluctantly turning back to Jo)—he's going to be married! Not Emil—Franz. There's news for you, Aunt Jo! The first of the flock you gathered into your fold, so say good-bye to him.

Jo. I'm glad to hear it. I want to settle my boys with a good wife and a nice home.

Demi. I entirely agree with you, Aunt Jo! That's what a fellow needs to keep him steady. And it's the duty of nice girls to marry just as soon as possible!

(He gives NAN a sly glance, which she ignores.)

Jo. That depends upon whether there are enough nice fellows to go round. The female population exceeds the male, you know, especially here in New England.

Demi. Which accounts for the high state of culture we are in, I suppose!

Jo. It is a merciful provision, my dear boy. For it takes three or four women to get each man into, through, and out of the world.

You are costly creatures, and it is well that mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters love their duty and do it so well, or you would perish off the face of the earth.

(She has taken up her darning again.)

Nan. Since that is the case, there is plenty of work for the superfluous women to do, in taking care of these poor, helpless men and their families. I see that more clearly every day, and am glad that my profession will make me a useful, happy, and independent spinster.

(She emphasizes the last word, and DEMI groans. The doors U.C. open, disclosing LAURIE and BESS upon the threshold. LAURIE is a handsome man of about forty, still possessing the debonair charm of his youth. BESS is a slim, golden-haired girl of eighteen, with her father's winsome manner, her mother's grace of figure, and a wistful, almost ethereal air which reminds one of the gentle "Beth" of Little Women. Her arm is linked with her father's, and his pride in her is evident in voice and look. AMY turns and sees them at once.)

Amy. Here are my husband and daughter—come to take me home, no doubt.

Laurie. Why, here's quite a gathering. Is it a party?

(He walks down to stand back of AMY. He touches her head gently and she reaches up to give his hand an affectionate little pat.)

Demi. No party—but there will be soon! Emil is in port from Hamburg and will be out here in a little while! And old Franz is planning to take a wife unto his bosom!

Bess. Why, how exciting! Is she pretty?

Demi. Typical Nordic, so Emil reports. Blonde and stolid. But hardly your type of blondeness, I should imagine, Princess.

Laurie. Well, now that the epidemic has broken out, it will ravage your flock, Jo. Be prepared for every sort of romance and rashness for the next five years.

Jo. I know. It's an awful responsibility, for they will come to me and insist that I can make their poor little loves run smoothly.

Demi. May I have an early appointment with you, Aunt Jo?

(They all laugh except NAN, who looks as if she didn't know what he meant.)

Arry. I suppose that Dan will never cause you any worries of that sort, Jo. He is much too rough and wild to appeal to girls.

Bess. Why, Mama, I like Dan very much.

Nan. And so do I.

Amy. But of course. All of us like him, for he's one of Jo's boys. But I don't think he would have very much romantic appeal for a girl. Not so much as Emil, for example.

Laurie. Where is Dan now, Jo?

Jo. In California, looking up mines, when last I heard. That has been a long time—months ago.

Nan. Wouldn't it be jolly if Dan were here! Then we could have a real reunion.

Laurie. Well, before our wandering sailor arrives, I want you all to come with me to our garden and see the new fountain. My daughter designed it; it's her first masterpiece!

(He puts his arm about her shoulders proudly.)

Amy. (Rising.) Laurie! Is it all ready?

Laurie. Yes, my lady. Will you come? Won't all of you? We shall be back before Emil arrives.

Meg. (Gathering up her sewing.) We are all so proud of Bess.

Amy. Bess, why didn't you tell me it was back from the stonecutter's?

Bess. We wanted to surprise you, Mama.

Amy. So that's why I was urged to come over to Plumfield for a visit this afternoon! You two conspirators!

(She places a hand fondly on the arm of each.)

Laurie. Come, Jo-we shall keep you only a moment.

(All of them except DEMI move to the doors U.C. and go out, talking together: "Look! It shines all the way from Parnassus!" "Bess, you're a real artist!" etc. DEMI catches NAN's arm as she is about to go with the others, and pulls her back.)

Demi. Don't you think some of us should stay here—because of Emil, you know. He might come and feel quite hurt if no one was here to welcome him home.

Nan. (Starting to go.) You stay, then.

Demi. But he's already seen me. Come on, stay, Nan. You know I need some medical advice. There's something terribly wrong with me, I know there is. It's really your professional duty to stay with me. If I were left alone, I might faint or—or have a fit or something.

(NAN goes to the medicine kit she placed on the floor beside the piano, gets it and brings it to the table D.L. and opens it—all in her best professional manner.)

Nan. (As she gets the bag.) How is your throat?

Demi. My throat? . . . Throat . . . oh—ah—yes, I remember now! It's well, perfectly well. The effect of that prescription was wonderful, simply wonderful! It must have had something powerful in it, Nan.

Nan. It did. If plain sugar can cure diphtheria in that remarkable manner, I must make a note of it.

(She smiles in spite of herself.)

Demi. Well, I knew I shouldn't see you for a week if I didn't scare up some excuse for a call at the office. You are so desperately busy all the time, I never get a word.

Nan. You ought to be busy too, and above such nonsense. Really, Demi, if you don't work harder, you'll never be anything but a cub reporter.

Demi. How can I, when I'm suffering so? I may not look deli-

cate, but I've a deep-seated heart complaint, and it will carry me off sooner or later. For only one doctor in the world can cure it, and she won't.

Nan. Oh, she won't, eh?

Demi. Nan, please listen to me for this once. You know that ever since we were kids, and you lived here at Plumfield, and we went to school and played together——

Nan. Let me see your tongue! (He stares, open-mouthed.)
Put out your tongue! (He does so in mute astonishment.) Hmmm.
... (Speaking to herself and writing on a pad of paper she has taken from her kit.) Symptoms of acidosis, or perhaps—

Demi. (Coming out of his stupor.) Sit down here, Nan. I want to talk to you, and you are going to listen!

(He pulls her down into the chair at L. of table.)

I'm not a schoolboy any longer, and I know my own mind. You can't go on treating me as if I were a joke.

(He drops to his knees beside her.)
You've got to listen to me, Nan. I love you!

(With calm deliberation she takes his wrist and places her fingers over his pulse, looking off into space with the professional expression of pulse-counting.)

Nan. Somewhat fast. . . . (As she again scribbles on the pad.) What were you saying, Demi?

Demi. (Scrambling to his feet angrily and awkwardly, and shouting at her.) I said I love you!

Nan. You do? How nice. How has your digestion been lately?

(DEMI groans in despair.)

How do you expect me to cure you of this heart-disease if you won't co-operate with me? A more refractory patient never lived. Did you go to that ball as I directed?

Demi. I did.

Nan. And devote yourself to pretty Miss West?

Demi. Danced with her the whole evening—all forty-eight hours of it.

Nan. No impression made on that susceptible organ of yours?

Demi. Not the slightest. I yawned in her face once, forgot to feed her, and gave a sigh of relief when I handed her back to her mama.

Nan. Repeat the dose as often as possible, and note the symptoms. I predict you will cry for it by and by.

Demi. Never! I'm sure it doesn't suit my constitution!

Nan. We shall see. Obey orders!

Demi. (Meekly.) Yes, Doctor. (Immediately aggressive.) But when I've courted every empty-headed young lady in this college and in this town and in this whole state——

(He hears a noise at the doors U.C. and stops. It is JO.)

Jo. (*Entering.*) I'm sorry to interrupt this quiet little tête-à-tête, but I wanted to see you both.

Nan. You're very welcome, Aunt Jo. We were just hoping someone would come, weren't we, Demi?

Demi. (Glowering at her.) Yes-oh, yes, indeed.

(Jo goes to the desk U.R. and, pulling out a drawer, takes out two plump, long, folded manuscripts and hands them to DEMI.)

Jo. Here are two more potboilers, Demi. It is still our secret, isn't it?

Demi. Yes, of course. That is—I had to tell the editor the other day, Aunt Jo. But he'll not say anything.

Jo. I'm sorry you told him. It isn't that I'm ashamed of these stories—that is, not quite. They are terribly silly and sensational.

Nan. It seems they are the kind many people like. My patients gobble them up while they are waiting for their turn.

Demi. You are a brick, Aunt Jo. It takes real courage to write

stuff you don't want to write, to pay for treatments for an ailment you bear alone. Why don't you tell the Professor?

Jo. There is no need. He is too serene and happy in his work, and too many troubled students depend upon his serenity. I can bear this alone—with you and Nan to help me. And the doctors say that I am much better. Isn't that true, Nan?

Nan. Yes, it is. You will soon be quite well; Doctor Conrad is sure of it.

Jo. There won't need to be many more of these—these illegitimate brain-children of mine. You know, they are the same sort of stories I first sold, years ago, before I met Fritz. He scolded me for them when he read them. He called them trash, and told me I could do better.

Demi. Think of the books you have to be proud of.

Jo. But they haven't brought enough money . . . and so I've supplemented it with this—this trash. The Professor thinks that the money Aunt March left us is still lasting . . . and I've just let him think so.

Demi. You can depend upon us, can't she, Nan?

Nan. You're jolly well right she can. You'll come to the hospital again tomorrow, Aunt Jo? Doctor Conrad will be in at nine——

(The arch U.L. opens and NAN stops abruptly. It is JOSIE—but what a different JOSIE! Her hair is brushed smoothly from her face and pinned up demurely in place. The rent in her dress has also been pinned up, and she now has the appearance and demeanor of a most proper and sedate young lady.)

Demi. Well! What a transformation! What fairy waved her magic wand over my topsy-turvy little sister?

Josie. (With dignity.) Can you be speaking to me, sir?

Jo. You look very nice, dear, with your hair combed and your skirt back in one piece.

Demi. But I'm suspicious. What sophomore is lurking in the garden, awaiting a tryst with so fair a maid? You will do well to confess all to your brother, lass, and give him your confidence after this!

Josie. (Suddenly becoming Ophelia.)

"I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven:
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede."

(She turns quickly from him and goes to the easy chair D.R. where she seats herself with great modesty, smoothing her skirt and placing herself in the pose of a most demure young lady.)

Demi. (Mopping his brow.) Whew! Ophelia's raving again.

Jo. Don't plague her, Demi. . . . Well, I shall rejoin the others in the garden of Parnassus. Call us if Emil should arrive.

(She goes toward the doors U.C.)

Well, what's this hurricane?

(TEDDY flies in at the doors U.C., calling as he comes.)

Teddy. Ahoy! Ship ahoy! He's coming! He's here! Commodore Emil—he's coming down the street! Come, Josie—let's give him the royal escort!

(Not perceiving her new dignity, he grabs her arm and forcibly propels her across the room and out the arch U.L.)

Jo. It will be good to have our jolly tar home again.

Nan. Good old Emil!

Demi. Wait till you see him-browner than ever!

(TEDDY is heard off L. singing lustily, "Sailing, Sailing, Over the Stormy Sea," then the trio enters—EMIL, in sailor's garb, very brown and hearty, with TEDDY on one side and JOSIE on the other. Their arms are loaded with bundles of strange shapes and sizes. He thrusts his load into JOSIE's surprised arms to stride across the room and take JO into his arms in a ferocious hug which lifts her off her feet.)

Jo. My blessed boy! It's good to have you home!

Emil. It's great to be here! Hullo, if it isn't Naughty Nan over here!

Nan. Hullo, yourself, Commodore! You're looking great! (They shake hands cordially.)

Emil. I see now why Demi couldn't wait for me but must rush on ahead!

(He and the others laugh. NAN puckers her nose in a way characteristic of her. JOSIE has deposited her bundles on the table, and now is behaving most strangely, alternating from her naturally merry manner to her sedate pose and back again, as she sits primly, only to bounce up to hover near EMIL, then return to the chair, etc.)

Where is Uncle Fritz?

Jo. Teddy went to the college for him as soon as we knew you were coming.

Teddy. He was with me, but I ran faster!

Demi. (Looking out the doors U.C.) Here comes the Professor now—and the rest of the family!

(And in from the garden come LAURIE and AMY, BESS, MEG and PROFESSOR BHAER. The latter is a stout, bearded man, genial and kindly.)

Emil. (As AMY enters first.) Aunt Amy! As beautiful as

(He kisses her.)

How are you, sir?

(He shakes hands with LAURIE.)

Laurie. As healthy as you look, Commodore!

Emil. Princess! And Aunt Meg! Uncle Fritz!

Professor. My boy! It iss so goot to see you!

(And they embrace each other in the good old German style, to the delight of all the observers.)

Emil. Was afraid I couldn't get off today, but found I could and steered straight for old Plumfield. Bless your hearts, how glad I am to see you all!

(He is near C., with one arm about JO and the other about the PROFESSOR. The others are grouped about—LAURIE, AMY, and BESS together at one side. JOSIE has returned to her demure manner, but TEDDY is hopping about excitedly.)

Teddy. You ought to "shiver your timbers" not "bless our hearts," Commodore! It's not nautical at all. How shippy and tarry all this smells!

(He sniffs at the bundles which have been deposited on the table.)

Emil. (Releasing his aunt and uncle in order to hold TEDDY off.) Avast, me hearty, and let me take soundings before you dive!

Jo. Presents!

Laurie. Trust the Commodore—he never forgets his friends. (While all watch with great interest, EMIL gets one of his bundles and brings out various parcels as he talks. The older people have sat down about the room.)

Emil. Here's a hawser that will hold our little cockboat still about five minutes—why, she's already still! Bless my bones, what's happened to Josie?

(He has taken out a string of coral beads.)

Teddy. She's rehearsing her rôle in "Diana, the Dying Swan." Isn't she good?

(Attention is centered on JOSIE, who becomes distinctly uncomfortable. She manages to retain considerable poise, however, and, looking up at EMIL through her lashes, she smiles sweetly.) Josie. I'm very glad you're home, Emil. And thank you for the beads.

Emil. (Blinking.) Don't tell me my sweetheart of every port has grown up! Well, well, and the Princess, too, I suppose. But here's a necklace the mermaids sent her!

(And he hands BESS a dainty bit of jewelry.)

Bess. How lovely!

Emil. Thought it looked like you, Princess.

Teddy. What's that—a grizzly bear?

(For EMIL has next taken out an inkstand in the shape of a large bear. He bows low as he presents this to Jo.)

Emil. That's for our famous scribbler. Knowing well your fondness for these fine animals, I brought this one to your pen, ma'am.

Jo. Oh, an inkwell! Very good, Commodore!

Professor. Immortal vorks vill come from its depths, I prophesy!

Emil. As Aunt Meg will wear caps, in spite of her youth, I brought her some bits of lace. Hope you'll like 'em.

(He hands MEG a filmy lace cap, which immediately replaces the one she has been wearing.)

Meg. Thank you, Emil.

Emil. I couldn't find anything elegant enough for you, Aunt Amy, because you already have everything, so I brought a little picture of a Madonna which always reminds me of you when Bess was a baby and you held her in your arms.

(He gives her a small picture in a gilt frame.)

Amy. How lovely! I shall treasure it always.

Emil. Now I flatter myself I've got just the thing for Nan, neat but not gaudy, a sort of sign, you see—very appropriate for a doctor!

(He holds up a pair of earrings shaped like skulls.)

Bess. Skulls! How horrid!

Josie. Nan won't wear earrings. Not even skulls.

(NAN accepts the gift, laughing.)

Emil. She'll enjoy punching your ears, then. She's never so happy as when she's overhauling her fellow-creatures and going for 'em with a knife!

Nan. Thanks, Emil. If I don't wear 'em, I'll hang 'em up instead of a shingle, outside my office.

Emil. I've got a lot of plunder for you men, but I knew the girls would be a lot happier when I'd unloaded my cargo for them.

Professor. (To Jo.) Vell, heart's dearest, vun of our boys ve haf again, and ve may rejoice greatly.

Jo. And Emil is to be second mate next voyage.

Emil. Only a matter of luck. Now tell me the news.

Teddy. I'm likely to flunk out in my freshman examinations and bring disgrace on the college president, his famous frau, and the entire Plumfield household!

(He twists himself into one of his favorite contortions, and they all laugh.)

Professor. (Shaking his head, but smiling affectionately at TEDDY.) My son, I haf fear, vill nefer be a scholar. But his wirtues he hass, all the same.

Jo. Nan has won a fellowship at one of the greatest medical schools in America.

Emil. May she find there all the tools she wants to saw bones with!

Demi. Kitchen tools would be more suitable for a young lady, I think.

Laurie. Poor fellow--your disease doesn't appear to be curable, does it?

(They all laugh, but not unkindly.)

Bess. Josie has the main part in the play for Commencement, and Charlotte Cameron, the great actress, is coming to see it.

Emil. (Striding down to JOSIE and putting his hand under her chin to lift her face so that he may look at her better.) How jolly!

Our little Josie will be a great actress herself some day—and now that I look at the wench, I find that she's growing into an uncommonly handsome woman!

(JOSIE writhes at thus being classed as still a child; she rises haughtily and moves upstage toward the window seat. EMIL is puzzled.)

Professor. (Looking about the room, his face beaming with pleasure.) How blessed it iss to haf so many friends gathered here again, iss it not, heart's dearest?

(He turns to Jo.)

Jo. Yes, Fritz, and in our gratitude, let's gather about the piano for at least one good old song together. It's a family custom I don't want us to forget when one of our sheep returns to the fold.

(The DOORBELL rings off L.)

Laurie. Perhaps that's another prodigal.

Teddy. I'll go, Mother.

(He goes out U.L.)

Laurie. (To Bess.) Come to the piano, my daughter. I want them to see how much you have improved in your playing.

(He leads her to the piano, and the others move toward it. TEDDY returns, holding a telegram in his hand. He wears a quizzical expression, for telegrams are not familiar experiences in his life. And they are always harbingers of evil. A look of consternation appears on every face.)

Jo. A telegram!

Teddy. (Taking it to her.) It's for you, Mother.

(There is silence as Jo opens and reads the message.)

Jo. (Speaking with difficulty.) It's Dan—he's hurt—a mine

(She drops into the easy chair. PROFESSOR BHAER bends over her anxiously.)

Amy. Dan! Why we were talking about him just this afternoon!

Teddy. Dan—Mother, not Dan! Things just don't happen to Dan!

Laurie. (Taking the telegram from her.) Here, Jo, let me see. (Reading.) "Daniel Kean badly hurt in fall a week ago. Still in grave danger. Today found your name in his papers. Twenty men saved through his heroic action."

Jo. He must live! And he shall—and come home to be nursed just as soon as he can stir, if I go and bring him myself!

Professor. Of course the boy vill live, dearest.

Teddy. Do go for him, Mother, and take me with you!

Laurie. Shall I go, Jo? I can go at once and see after him. If he's able, I'll bring him home. If not, I'll stay and look after him. He'll pull through. Dan will never die of a fall; he's got nine lives and not lost half of 'em yet.

Teddy. May I go with you, Uncle Laurie? I'm just spoiling for a journey! And it would be such a lark to go with you! I want to see the mines and Dan, and hear all about it and help——

Jo. I can't spare you, Teddy. You always get into trouble unless I keep you close at home. Those reckless express trains always go down precipices and burn up or telescope. I hate to think of your going, Laurie.

Meg. (Anxiously.) They say those fast trains go nearly forty miles an hour!

Laurie. Oh, there's no need to worry about me. I shall get there safely enough.

Amy. I shall go and begin packing your things, dear. Come with me, Bess.

Demi. (Looking at his watch.) There isn't a train for two hours yet.

Professor. Then there iss time yet to sing together as we were

going to do. It will hearten thee for the anxious journey, and bind our souls together more strongly in hope and love.

Laurie. You are right, Professor. Come back to the piano, Bess. You must be brave, too, my daughter, and pray for your old playmate.

(He leads BESS back to the piano, and the others gather around, less joyously than when they were interrupted by the telegram. When JO starts to rise from her chair, she gives a start, puts her hand to her heart, and sinks back into the chair weakly. The PROFESSOR sees her and bends over her anxiously.)

Professor. Heart's dearest, vhat iss it? Vhat iss the matter? (The attention of the others is drawn to Jo.)

Meg. Nan-where is your medicine kit?

Amy. Jo-it's one of her spells again! The excitement-

Demi. I'll get water!

(He runs out the door D.L. NAN has quickly opened her medicine kit and has taken some tablets from it. DEMI returns with the water, and NAN gives the tablets to Jo. MEG has been rubbing Jo's wrists.)

Nan. (As she offers the tablets.) Here, take these, Aunt Jo. Professor. My dearest—do not be anxious about the lad.

Jo. (Smiling weakly.) Now—it's nothing.... I'm—quite—all right...

Nan. (*Turning to the others*.) She's better—nothing to worry about! She'll be quite all right now.

Jo. Quite. Please go on with the singing. I'll sit here for a bit and listen. And sing something cheery—"Auld Lang Syne" perhaps.

(Again they go to the piano. PROFESSOR BHAER lingers beside Jo, but she pats his hand reassuringly, and presently he joins the others. They sing "Auld Lang Syne," and as they are singing the second stanza.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Act II, Scene 1

It is a morning three weeks later. Bright sunlight streams in from the doors and windows at C. Jo, PROFESSOR BHAER, and TEDDY are finishing their breakfast at the table D.L. The PROFESSOR is reading a newspaper, pausing now and then to drink his coffee. There is a tall stack of letters beside Jo's plate. She has one, opened, in her hand, and there are several evidently already opened and read. TEDDY is helping her with her mail.

Jo. I've made up my mind on one point. I will not answer this kind of letter.

(She lays it down with a gesture of finality.)

Teddy. What is it, Mother?

Jo. I've sent at least six letters to this boy, and he probably sells 'em.

Teddy. Finish your breakfast in peace, and I'll open the others.

(Jo goes back to her coffee and roll, and TEDDY begins opening letters.)

Here's one from the South.

(He breaks the imposing seal and reads.)

"Madam: As it has pleased heaven to bless your efforts with a large fortune, I feel no hesitation whatever in asking you to supply funds to purchase a new communion-service for our church. To whatever denomination you belong, you will of course respond liberally to such a request as this. Respectfully yours, Mrs. X. Y. Zavier." Whew—such brass!

Jo. Send a civil refusal, dear. The little I have to give must go to feed and clothe the poor at my doors. Go on. What's the next?

Professor. (Looking up.) How does Dan find himself this morning, dearest?

Jo. He was feeling quite strong when I went in to see. He is recovering from the injury very fast, isn't he?

Professor. (Reaching over to pat her arm affectionately.) He has had a faithful nurse, liebchen.

(She smiles, and he returns to his paper.)

Teddy. (Reading the next letter.) Listen to this! A literary youth of eighteen proposes that you put your name to a novel which he has written. And after the first edition, your name is to be taken off and his put on. There's a cool and modest proposal for you. I guess you won't agree to that, in spite of your soft-heart-edness toward young scribblers.

Jo. Couldn't be done. Tell him so, kindly, and don't let him send the manuscript! I have seven on hand now, and barely time to read my own.

(She butters another piece of roll, while TEDDY opens another letter. Suddenly the door U.C. opens and JOSIE stands there, as fresh as the morning and twice as gay.)

Josie. Good morning! Such a lazy family!

(The BHAERS turn and see her.)

Jo. Good morning, Josie.

Professor. Thy cheeks haf bonny roses blooming in them this morning, Niece.

(JOSIE comes down to R. of table.)

Teddy. Bet there are briar thorns around somewhere ready to scratch! Want to go bicycling today, Jo?

Josie. (With tremendous dignity.) I am getting too old for such tomboyish sports, thank you, Theodore.

(TEDDY laughs scornfully.)

Besides, I shall be busy. Is Bess upstairs with Dan, Aunt Jo? Aunt Amy said she was here.

Jo. Yes, she took Dan's breakfast up to him.

(JOSIE starts out U.L., but stops a moment uncertainly.)

Josie. Is anybody else—is—is Emil with them?

Jo. Why, no, dear. He isn't. He went out early this morning; said he'd get his coffee in town and have a look at the boat.

Josie. Oh! Of course——
(She smiles a little lamely.)

Teddy. (Looking up from the letter he has just opened.) Better wait and hear the famous scribbler's mash letters. Here's a fellow wants to know what sort of girl he should marry and if Mother knows any like those in her stories!

Josie. Give him Nan's address and see what he'll get! (She runs out and up the stairs.)

Jo. What is that blotted one? It looks rather awful, to judge by the ink.

Teddy. (Opening it.) It's a poem written to you! Listen to this!

(He reads from the ink-smudged page.)

"Oh, were I a heliotrope,
I would play poet,
And blow a breeze of fragrance
To you; and none should know it.

Your form like the stately elm
When Phoebus gilds the morning ray;
Your cheeks like the ocean bed
That blooms a rose in May.

Consider the lilies, how they grow;
They toil not, yet are fair,
Gems and flowers and Solomon's seal.
The geranium of the world is Josephine Bhaer."

(Jo and TEDDY laugh together at this effusion.)

Jo. The poor fellow must be insane.

(During this time the PROFESSOR has been mainly absorbed in his newspaper, glancing up now and then to listen to the letters or to sip his coffee. Now he turns a page of his paper, sees something which disgusts him, and throws the paper down on the table.)

Professor. Ach! Vhy they print such trash I do not see!

(Jo avoids his eyes and goes on quietly with her breakfast.)

Teddy. Another story, Father? What's the title of this one?

Professor. (With great disgust.) "The Purloined Secret: The Mystery of the Missing Mermaid." Such trash should not be offered so to young minds that haf not yet wisdom to choose vhat they read!

Teddy. I've read some of 'em, Father. They aren't as bad as they sound—just silly. (*To* Jo.) You should hear the Professor when he gets started in philosophy class, Mother.

Jo. Teddy!

Teddy. Julie Thorpe—her father's the editor of the paper, and she knows Demi, too, and says her father has his eye on him—Julie said that her father said that the authoress of these stories is a woman who is suffering from a fatal disease of some kind and that she writes the tales to get money for treatments from a specialist. He told Julie——

Jo. Teddy—never mind that! It is likely a story the girl made up.

Professor. (As he rises from the table.) Unless soon he stops using his paper for such things, I cancel my subscription to his paper. Excuse me, mein lieb. I must hurry to the college, for much vork I haf today.

(He hurries into the study D.R. Jo also rises.)

Jo. Gather up the rest of those letters and put them some-

where, Teddy. I haven't the patience to finish them now. I think I'll dust a bit down here and then go to my work.

(PROFESSOR BHAER comes out of the study, books bulging from his brief case and his pockets. He comes to Jo and kisses her.)

Professor. I hope the day vill go vell vith thee, my dearest. I vill dine at college vith Professor Plock, who is to visit us today. Send Ted down to us, and thou shalt have a quiet time.

Jo. Thank you, dear. Good-bye. (He exits U.L.)

Teddy. Must I go now, Mom?

Jo. Not yet. Mary will be late coming this morning, and you must help me take the dishes into the kitchen and tidy up a bit here. If the bell rings, you go and say that I'm not seeing anyone. I won't see Oueen Victoria herself if she comes today!

Teddy. Now, come, Mrs. Bhaer—do see the good queen! (*Plaintively*.) She's not so young as she used to be, you know, and she's come a frightfully long way—all across the ocean.

Jo. (Giving him a playful push.) Don't be impertinent, sir! Take some of those dishes into the kitchen, and bring me the duster.

(TEDDY picks up some of the dishes and goes into the kitchen D.L. Jo arranges the pillows at the window seats. She looks out the window and backs away quickly as TEDDY re-enters bearing a feather duster.)

There's an artist out there sketching on the lawn. If he decides to come in, remember I'm not seeing anyone. Give me that duster.

(She takes the duster and goes to work on the mantelpiece. TEDDY takes more dishes to the kitchen, whistling gaily, and returns.)

Teddy. (As he returns from a trip to the kitchen.) Mother, I want a bicycle of my own.

Jo. You'd fall and break your neck. Walking or riding behind

a good horse is fast enough locomotion for a son of mine.

(The DOORBELL rings off L.)

You go—and remember that I'm not receiving callers.

(She dusts the books in the case above the desk, her back turned to the arch U.L., where TEDDY exits.)

Mrs. Parmalee. (Off L.) Ain't this where dear Aunt Jolives, son?

Teddy. (Off L.) Why—er—yes, it is; but she isn't at home. Mrs. Parmalee. You just tell her we're all the way from Oshkosh and couldn't go home without seein' dear Aunt Jo. My girls just admire her works so and are set on gettin' a sight o' her. I know it's early in the day, but we're goin' to see Holmes and Longfeller and the rest o' the celebrities, so we ran out here fust thing. Mrs. Erastus Kingsbury Parmalee of Oshkosh, tell her. We don't mind waitin'; we can look around for a spell if she ain't ready to see folks vet.

(And before TEDDY can increase the strength of his defense, MRS. ERASTUS KINGSBURY PARMALEE and her two adolescent daughters, ESMERALDA and ANNABELLA, have pressed past him and have entered the room, gazing rapturously about them. MRS. PARMALEE looks just as one would expect—very stout, with a reddish face, and attired in the latest fashion, that is, as far as Oshkosh would know about fashions. ESMERALDA, the elder daughter, is very plain and thin and wears spectacles. She moves awkwardly, catching her toe in the rug and bumping against furniture. ANNABELLA is shorter and plump, and given to giggling. TEDDY follows them into the room.)

Teddy. (Entering.) Mrs. Bhaer is not visible today—out just now, I believe. But you can see the grounds if you like.

(Jo has her back to the intruders, and is dusting the desk with unusual industry.)

Mrs. Parmalee. Oh, thank you—thank you. Sweet, pretty place. Are you her son? I know you must be!

Teddy. Why—uh—you see, I am an orphan she picked up and took care of. A foundling, you know.

(He glances at Jo's back and gets a mischievous pleasure out of the start she gives. He is further inspired.)

That is, I was—uh—half an orphan, and she took both my mother and me in and gave us a home. My mother is the maid here; that is she over there dusting.

(JO turns quickly, but decides that she must delay punishment if she is to be saved from the PARMALEES, and resumes her dusting. MRS. PARMALEE turns her eyes upon the "maid" whom the kind author has befriended, as do EsmeralDA, who has been staring open-mouthed at the objects in the room, and ANNABELLA, who twists her ring and giggles at each remark that is made.)

Mrs. Parmalee. Is she-

Teddy. (Pointing to bis ears.) She is deaf. Stone deaf. She doesn't hear a word we're saying. Poor thing—you see her husband used to beat her, and that's why Mrs. Bhaer took her in and gave her a home.

Mrs. Parmalee. Poor, poor dear!

(She sniffles and wipes the back of her hand across her nose.)

Now ain't that jes' too good of dear Aunt Jo to take in a miserable critter like that and give her a home.

(There is nothing for the harassed authoress now but to enact the rôle TEDDY has created for her; she moves toward the table D.L., as MRS. PARMALEE gazes at her, shaking her head in pity for the poor "critter," and the two daughters stare at Jo open-mouthed. TEDDY turns away to conceal his mirth.)

Annabella. Cain't she hear nothin' we say, Ma?

Mrs. Parmalee. Hush, Annabella! No, she cain't; she's deef, poor thing!

(Jo begins to gather up the dishes remaining on the table,

with evident intent of escaping to the kitchen. MRS. PARMA-LEE turns to TEDDY as she indicates the door D.R.)

Is that the study where she writes, in there? Do give us one peep into her sanctum, since she is out!

Teddy. (Crossing to the door, opening it, and indicating its interior with a sweeping gesture.) This, madam, is where her genius burns!

Mrs. Parmalee. (In great awe, as she gazes into the room.) Girls, there is the spot where she wrote those sweet, those moral tales which have thrilled us to the soul! (To TEDDY.) Could my daughter Esmeralda go in and take one morsel of paper, an old pen, a postage stamp even, as a memento of this gifted woman?

(Jo has gathered up the dishes, but, believing herself now safe from recognition, has paused in the doorway D.L. to hear this eloquent tribute to her talents.)

Teddy. (Solemnly, with another grand gesture.) Esmeralda may enter and choose her memento.

(He motions for ESMERALDA to enter. The girl stands a moment in awkward silence, then goes into the study.)

Mrs. Parmalee. (Sighing.) If only my Esmeralda will follow in her footsteps! Annabella, you can be the one to get the souvenirs from Longfeller, and then we call on Emerson and Holmes—

(At that moment, ESMERALDA reënters, in her hand AMY's drawing of Jo, and on her face the light of a great discovery. She holds the picture out to her mother and points toward Jo, who makes a hasty retreat to the kitchen as soon as she realizes what has happened.)

Esmeralda. Ma! It's Mrs. Bhaer herself! That's her! This is her picture, an' it has her name on it!

(MRS. PARMALEE blinks at the picture, and turns to compare it with the original—but IO has vanished.)

Mrs. Parmalee. Why-why, bless me, so it is!

(TEDDY looks about for escape, but can't decide which way to go.)

Now, ain't that queer! I declare I don't know what to think,

(She turns upon TEDDY who is rooted to the spot and at his
wit's end.)

Annabella. But that cain't be her, Ma. That's the maid. He said so.

(TEDDY shakes his head in a violent affirmative and grins inanely. The poor PARMALEES stand in mute bewilderment. Suddenly Jo dashes in D.L. She has stuck a bonnet on her head at a most surprising angle, and has thrown a shawl about her shoulders. She stops in apparent surprise at seeing the visitors. They stare at her in open-mouthed confusion.)

Jo. (*Briskly*.) Oh—how do you do? I'm Mrs. Bhaer—Josephine Bhaer. Did you wish to see me, madam? Sorry to have been out when you came. I just came in through the kitchen. What may I do for you? Are these charming young ladies your daughters? Would you like for me to autograph your albums and give you a few mementoes for your scrapbooks?

(MRS. PARMALEE doesn't understand the mystery, but decides to accept it as simply one of the vagaries of a celebrity.)

Mrs. Parmalee. Are you—well, I declare! We thought you was—he said you was—

(She points to the shrinking TEDDY.)

Jo. He? Oh, Teddy. Why, you see he is—— (She taps her forehead significantly.) We dropped him when he was a baby.

(ESMERALDA and ANNABELLA steal apprehensive glances at

TEDDY.)

He's perfectly harmless—wouldn't hurt a flea—but just not quite bright, you know.

(This revenge is too much for TEDDY'S long-repressed mirth, and he runs for the kitchen D.L. MRS. PARMALEE and her DAUGHTERS look after him curiously and pityingly.)

Mrs. Parmalee. (Sympathetically.) What a pity! He looks right bright, too. I always give thanks that my two girls—this is Esmeralda, she's the oldest—and this one's Annabella—I was sayin' I always give thanks that they was always so bright and pert. But you never can tell. Now, when Annabella was little——

Jo. Wouldn't you like to go down to the college and look about there?

Mrs. Parmalee. We know you're busy, but we just wanted to see dear Aunt Jo and tell you we do admire your works so. If you ever come to Oshkosh, your feet won't be allowed to touch the pavement; for you'll be borne in the arms of the populace, we'll be so dreadful glad to see you.

Jo. That will be-uh-most kind, I'm sure.

Mrs. Parmalee. Well, come along, girls. We must be gettin' along if we're to call on Longfeller and Holmes and the rest this morning. But I just must tell you——

Jo. (Politely, but firmly.) If you want to go out this way "DION OF THE BOOK O

Mrs. Parmalee. Well, good-bye. We must be gettin' along if we're to call on the others before noon, an' we set our minds on seein' all the celebrities before we go back to Oshkosh. I declare, back in Oshkosh——

(She has turned back, and appears to be ready to prolong her visit indefinitely; but TEDDY'S tousled head suddenly appears in the doorway D.L., as he peeps in warily to see if the coast is clear. The daughters see him and scramble out in fright, urging their mother along with them. She waves her hand as if it were a handkerchief.)

Good-bye-Good-bye! Come and see us in Oshkosh!

(Her voice trails off as her daughters propel her out of sight. Jo sinks onto the sofa in relief, as TEDDY comes from the kitchen.)

Jo. You villain! How did you ever think up such awful fibs? Teddy. (Tweaking her nose and then dropping a kiss on the tip of it.) I get my talent from my mother—who dropped me on my head when I was a baby.

Jo. I hope we shall be forgiven our sins in this line, but I don't know what is to become of us if this sort of thing keeps on.

Teddy. It was fun, though. What a jolly play we could write together, Mrs. Bhaer! And act it all ourselves!

(He stretches out his arms and declaims melodramatically.)
Mother! My devoted mother who left me on a doorstep at the tender age of one and a half! At last I've found you!

(He clasps her in his arms, and they laugh merrily.)

Jo. (Seriously.) But we mustn't be guilty of such deceit again, Teddy. I shall have to lock myself in my room upstairs and turn this into a public museum with you for guide, I suppose. This seems to be the price one pays for a little fame.

(There is the sound of feet RUNNING downstairs, and JOSIE rushes in at the arch U.L.)

Josie. Dan wants to come down, Aunt Jo! He's feeling strong as a Comanche today and doesn't want to stay upstairs another minute!

Teddy. (Already on his way to the stairs.) I'll fetch him!

Jo. That is splendid. Bring him along, Teddy. (TEDDY disappears upstairs.)

But you and Bess must take care of him, for I'm going into the study and write.

Josie. Of course we will. Bess has got to be a perfectly splen-

did nurse, and I amuse him by acting out parts in plays. Isn't it funny, Aunt Jo—Dan likes Romeo and Juliet best of all, when you'd think he would want something roaring with Indians and fighting and robbers and things!

Jo. Underneath Dan's rough exterior is a heart that is tender as a woman's. That is often true of people, Josie, and we cannot judge them wisely just by appearance.

Josie. I know that, Auntie, and that's one reason why I've wanted to be an actress; because to act parts you have to do more than just look like the person—you have to know how he feels and thinks on the inside.

Jo. (Looking at her approvingly.) You are quite right, my dear. And an actress who can do that is a great woman as well as a great artist.

Josie. Do you think I might be a great actress some day?

Jo. That is a hard question to answer, Josie. Perhaps you'd better wait and see how Charlotte Cameron answers it.

Josie. It is only three weeks now till the play! I can hardly wait. What if I get stagefright knowing that she is in the audience, Aunt Jo? I would just die, and the play would be ruined.

Jo. (Smiling.) That would be real tragedy, wouldn't it? But you won't be afraid.

Josie. Aunt Jo, there is something I want to ask you—something dreadfully important——

(There is the sound of VOICES and STEPS off L.)

They are coming now, so I'll have to wait, but I must talk to you. Soon.

Jo. Very well, dear.

(Down the stairs and through the arch U.L. comes DAN, leaning on a cane and supported on the other side by TEDDY. BESS is just behind them, with a blanket on her arm. DAN is tall and dark, with a ruggedness suggestive of the great Western outdoors, in spite of his illness.)

Bess. (As they are entering.) The hollyhocks are beginning to bloom in the garden, Dan.

Teddy. We'll take him out there as soon as he's rested here a bit,

(JOSIE has placed the pillows comfortably on the couch, and TEDDY helps DAN to recline there. Both girls hover about, but it is BESS whom DAN'S eyes follow as if he could never get enough of looking at her.)

Josie. He's almost well, isn't he, Aunt Jo?

Jo. He's doing splendidly. Well enough, I believe, that we can have the commencement ball here at Plumfield after all.

Josie. Oh, Auntie-how jolly!

Bess. Really, Aunt Jo?

Jo. It is to be next week, you know. Think you could dance about and pay court to the ladies by then, Dan?

Dan. By then I could dance a jig and court a dozen ladies all at once!

Josie. That's a simply wonderful idea, Aunt Jo! And Dan can dress up in his Mexican caballeros and sombreros and navajos and things, and all the girls will fall in love with him!

(There is general amusement at Josie's Spanish. BESS is tucking the blanket about DAN'S shoulders.)

Teddy. Huh! What should Dan care about women! He's lived with Indians, and he's mined gold and hunted outlaws and ridden all the way from California on a train that goes nearly forty miles an hour. What use has he got for women? I'm surprised he lets a girl take care of him and mollycoddle him with blankets and things!

Dan. Even Chief Fire-Cloud would be glad to have such a nurse as the Princess, old fellow.

Josie. Teddy would be glad to have a girl look after him, only he won't own it. He says women shouldn't be given the right to vote and that they aren't as intelligent as men. Why, the other day when we were pegging away at the Iliad and came to where Zeus tells Juno not to inquire into his plans or he'll whip her, Teddy said——

(In her growing ardor, JOSIE is shaking her head more emphatically.)

Teddy. (Interrupting.) If you shake your head in that violent way, you'll addle what brains you've got; and I'd take care of 'em if I were you!

(Josie looks as if she were ready to pounce upon him, but just then the sound of EMIL'S VOICE in song is heard off L.. Josie stops in consternation and in great haste attempts to smooth her ruffled hair and rumpled clothes. She hurries over to the window U.L., and there assumes a languid and sorrowful pose, gazing out the window as if in deep meditation. Only Jo takes notice of this strange behavior, for DAN is saying something in a low tone to Bess, and at the first sound of EMIL'S song, TEDDY starts out U.L., stops, turns back to the others.)

It's the Commodore!

(And TEDDY dashes out to greet him.)

Jo. Take care of Dan and entertain him and Emil, girls. I shall be in the study if you need me. But do try to keep out the souvenir collectors. I must write this morning.

Bess. We'll take care of them—and the curious visitors, too, Auntie.

(She sits in the easy chair.)

Jo. I'll see Emil later.
(She goes into the study, D.R.)

Bess. (To DAN.) Isn't it dear of Aunt Jo to have the ball here so that you may enjoy it?

Dan. Would you miss me if I were not there, Princess?

(His tone is light, but there is an unmistakable note of tenderness in it.)

Bess. (Simply.) Of course. We all would miss you.

(As EMIL'S voice has come nearer, TEDDY has joined him in his song. Hearing steps at the outside door, off L., JOSIE has darted a quick eager glance through the arch, but has then immediately resumed her pose at the window. Now EMIL and TEDDY swing into the room from U.L., arms about each other's shoulders, finishing the song just after they enter. They pause just inside the arch.)

Emil. (Sweeping off his cap.) The top of the morning to you, ladies! Hallo—our hero is downstairs early today.

(BESS has smiled her usual gentle smile, but JOSIE appears oblivious to the newcomer and the events going on about her. EMIL walks across the room to DAN as he speaks to him, then leans against the mantelpiece. TEDDY sprawls on the piano bench.)

Dan. Not such a hero, Emil; anybody else would have done just what I did.

Teddy. But it was you who thought quickly enough to do it! Why, if it hadn't been for you, twenty women out West would be without husbands right now, and a hundred children—maybe more, Lord bless 'em—would be fatherless! I guess you're our hero here at Plumfield, all right.

Bess. Dan is so well that Aunt Jo said the commencement ball might be held here at Plumfield.

Emil. That's jolly! It will be great larks to squire the ladies round again!

(JOSIE has stolen occasional glances over her shoulder, but to no avail. She tries sighing, and now a very deep and soulshuddering sigh does attract the attention of the others.)

Great Scott! What's the matter with Josie?

Teddy. Juliet's in her tomb again.

(JOSIE flashes him an indignant look and sighs again deeply. EMIL strides over to her, takes her by the shoulders, and shakes her lightly. She yields to him limply, turning to him with her eyes wide and alluring, her lips parted in a halfsmile.)

Emil. Come out of the trance, Josie! The play hasn't begun yet, child.

(She turns away from him and back to the window in sorrowful silence. TEDDY gets up and drapes himself against the piano in a caricature of JOSIE'S pose.)

Teddy. (Melodramatically.) Rebuke me not, Claudius, and come not near unto me, for my soul is sick unto death!

(He suddenly loses his balance and slips upon the piano keys, making a terrific crash. They all laugh—even JOSIE, though she quickly suppresses her amusement to resume her melancholy mien.)

Dan. You shouldn't tease her, Teddy.

Emil. You'll be hitting the trail again as soon as Aunt Jo will let you cut loose from your moorings, I suppose, Dan. What's to be your next adventure?

Teddy. He's going back to the Indians in Montana, and I'm going along! Shall I bring you a squaw, Commodore?

Emil. A fancy set of scalps would be more to my fancy. Are you really going back to the redskins, Dan?

Dan. I have a strong leaning toward my old friends. The Montanas are a peaceful tribe and need help awfully. Hundreds of 'em have died of starvation because they didn't stick up for their rights. The Sioux are fighters, thirty thousand strong, so the Government is afraid of 'em and gives 'em all they want. I call that a damned shame!

(He stops short, as the expletive slips out, but his eyes flash, and he goes on, so much in earnest that he sits up and swings his feet to the floor.)

It is just that, and I won't beg pardon, even of you, Princess!

Emil. But what can you do about them, Dan?

Dan. If I'd had any money I'd have given it to the poor devils, cheated out of everything and waiting patiently, after being driven from their land to places where nothing will grow. Honest government agents could do a lot, and I've a feeling I ought to go and give 'em a hand. I know their lingo, and I like 'em. I've got a few thousand now, and I ain't sure I've got any right to spend it on myself and settle down to enjoy it.

Teddy. Do it, do it! And take me along to help! I'm just raging to get among those fine fellows and hunt.

Emil. Sounds like a pretty hard vessel for one man to take ashore.

Dan. There's another plan I've had up my sleeve. I have a notion to try farming in the West. It's grand when it's on a large scale. And I feel as if steady work would be rather jolly after loafing around so long. I tried sheep farming in Australia.

Teddy. Since I'm a black sheep anyway, Mother'd be sure to let me go with you, then!

(Once more the DOOR off L. is heard to open. This time it is NAN, who enters, looking fresh and brisk as usual, with her medicine kit in her hand.)

Nan. Good morning, everybody!

(They greet her.)

Teddy. Dan is just telling us about the farm-

(He is interrupted by DEMI'S entrance, U.L. He is puffing and panting for breath.)

Demi. Nan, I ran all the way up the hill trying to catch up with you! Didn't you hear me hullo?

Nan. Of course. But I knew you'd catch up by and by. (To DAN.) What's this about a farm?

Dan. Only a pipe dream of mine, Nan. A big farm out in Kansas.

(She sits down at L. of the table. EMIL and TEDDY wander about, sitting down only to jump up restlessly. JOSIE is still

at the window U.L. She has sat down on the window seat, but is still languorous and tragic. DEMI hovers about NAN, much to her annoyance.)

Teddy. I'm to herd the sheep and keep off the Indians!

Demi. You go out and start a new town, Dan, and when the rest of us are ready to swarm, we'll come out to you and settle there. You will want a newspaper very soon, and I like the idea of running one myself much better than grinding away as I do now.

Bess. Is there any art there?

Dan. Plenty of nature, and that's a lot better. You'd find splendid horses to model, and scenery such as you never saw in your mouldy old Rome to paint. Even pumpkins grow big and beautiful out there. You could play Cinderella in one of 'em, Josie!

(JOSIE has heard enough to fire her interest. She discards her rôle of tragic muse and comes toward DAN.)

Josie. Oh, when are you going to do it, Dan? May I have my own theatre and do nothing but tragedies? You could name the town—let's see—Thespian City or, maybe, Hamlet.

Teddy. Why, the town will be Dansville, and Dan will be mayor.

Nan. I speak for the medical practice in the new town, Dan. Teddy. Dan isn't going to allow any women under forty in his place. He doesn't like 'em.

Nan. That won't affect me, because doctors are exceptions to all rules. There won't be much sickness in Dansville; every one will lead such active, wholesome lives, and only energetic young people will go there. But accidents are sure to happen, what with wild cattle, fast riding, Indian scrimmages, and the recklessness of Western life. That will just suit me. I long for broken bones—and I get so few here.

Dan. You may come, Doctor. I'll send for you just as soon as I have a roof to cover you. I'll scalp a few red fellows or smash up a dozen cowboys for your special benefit.

Demi. She'll have to be a respectable married woman with a husband to protect her, won't she, Dan?

Nan. No, thanks, I'll do my own protecting and shan't be bothered with a husband hovering around and getting in my way!

Teddy. Demi can be the undertaker as well as the newspaper editor. He'll enjoy burying the patients Nan kills, and writing their obituaries. Tell us more about the farm, Dan.

Bess. Let's go out into the garden. Dan needs the fresh air and can tell us about the new town there.

Teddy. (Going to DAN.) Here's my strong right arm, Mayor!

(He assists DAN as they prepare to go out U.C., followed by BESS with the blanket. NAN rises.)

Nan. I'd like to hear more about the West, but I must see Aunt Jo, if she'll let me interrupt her work.

Teddy. She's in the study, Nan.

Demi. I'll wait and take you to the office on my bicycle.

Nan. Thanks-I'll walk.

Demi. (Following her to the door D.R.) Come, Nan—you know jolly well you can't go on treating me this way forever. You might as well give in soon as late.

(She closes the door behind her. He turns disconsolately and follows the others out U.C. EMIL, laughing at this perpetual warfare, is about to exit when he notices that JOSIE has waited behind, again at the window U.L.)

Emil. Coming, Josie? Or waiting for the fairy godmother? (She does not answer but continues to stare at nothing, the very symbol of futility. He goes to her.)

What has happened to my little cockboat that always rode the high waves with her flags a-flying in the wind? Come on, Josie, smile a bit!

(He chucks her under the chin, and she turns away with a gesture of outraged dignity.)

Don't you want to come out into the garden with the others?

Josie. I am waiting for Aunt Jo. She and I—we have a very important matter to discuss.

Emil. Oh, I see. Well, so long.

(And he goes out U.C., with an anxious glance back at her from the doorway. As soon as he is out the door JOSIE turns quickly and runs to the door and stands looking after him. She sighs wistfully, and then begins to speak Juliet's lines.)

Iosie. "Romeo, O Romeo, . . .

Love's heralds should be thoughts,

Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,

Driving back shadows over lowering hills:

Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love, And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings."

(She starts, and stops speaking abruptly when JO and NAN enter, goes over to the desk U.R., and pretends to be looking at a book. JO and NAN do not notice her.)

Jo. (As she and NAN enter.) But they all need so much looking after and comforting for their little heartaches. My adopted family is quite a large one, remember, and not many of the others can take care of themselves as well as you, my dear.

Nan. Yes, but you must think of yourself, Aunt Jo. Well, I shall stop by the hospital to report to Dr. Conrad. Good-bye.

Jo. Good-bye, Nan.

Nan. I am warning you again, you must take more rest. That heart of yours won't stand much, you know.

Jo. (Lightly.) Don't worry about me, Nan. But I shall take your advice. Good-bye.

(NAN exits U.L. Jo follows her to the door, then turns back and sees JOSIE.)

Well, Josie, you forsook the patient?

Josie. He has plenty of nurses without me. I—do you have time to talk just a little while, Aunt Jo? You remember what we were saying before the others came in. . . Jo. Of course, my dear. Let's sit down. Let me get my mending. I can sew while we talk.

(She crosses to get her darning basket from the desk U.R., and then sits in the easy chair. She smiles up at Josie encouragingly.)

Josie. Mind if I stand up? I-I can think better.

Jo. (Smiling.) So could I when I was your age.

Josie. (Earnestly.) You—I am a great deal like you were when you were young, aren't I, Aunt Jo? Everybody tells me so, and Grandfather March always called me "Little Jo."

Jo. I'm afraid you are just that unfortunate, dear.

Josie. Oh, I'm glad. It makes me feel proud to think I am like you. And that is why, too, I wanted to talk to you—because I thought, being like you, you could remember how you felt and would understand what I say.

(She is standing between JO and the table D.L.)

Jo. You may be sure I'll try to. Still want to talk about the stage?

Josie. Yes, that and—and something else. (*Turning impetuously to face* Jo.) Aunt Jo, why does everyone act as if I were still a child? Why can't they see that I'm grown up and have feelings like a grown-up person? Why must everyone treat me like a baby?

Jo. (Carefully concealing any amusement she feels.) Who treats you like a child, Josie?

Josie. Oh, Teddy does, and Mother and Demi and . . . and Emil.

(She turns away and bites her lower lip to keep it from trembling.)

Jo. Oh, I see.... Well, mothers and older brothers always want to keep little girls to pet and scold, don't you think? And Teddy is still such a child himself he can't realize that his favorite cousin and

playfellow has grown up into a young lady. And as for Emil—well. . .

Josie. He's the worst of all! He acts as if he were a million years older than me, when he's really only twenty-three, and I'm eighteen—well, practically eighteen. He teases me and calls me "little cockboat" and has no respect for me at all. And he thinks that horrid Miss Dunbar is a perfect lady. He said so.

(Her voice almost breaks.)

Jo. (Watching her closely.) Well, you shouldn't worry about that. He will be gone back to sea very soon, and—

Josie. (Interrupting.) When is he going? He won't tell me.

Jo. His ship sails in about three weeks, I believe.

(JOSIE has her back to JO and is nervously twisting a corner of the table cloth.)

Then you won't be annoyed by him, and you can go on with your acting and forget him, for he may be gone a long time—possibly a year.

Josie. (In a muffled voice.) Yes, I—I know.

Jo. Did Uncle Laurie tell you that Miss Cameron is to stay overnight with them at Parnassus after the play, and that you are to interview her the next morning? If she says you have real talent, your mother will consent for you to study for the stage, I am sure. How exciting it would be to have a great actress in the family!

Josie. (Sighing.) I suppose I'd have to then, wouldn't I? . . . I mean, that would be wonderful, wouldn't it? But, Aunt Jo, do you think a woman is ever happy with a career? I mean—well, you're a famous writer, but you've got the Professor and Teddy, too.

Jo. (Seriously.) I understand what you mean, Josie, and I imagine we agree on this, too. My scribbling has brought me great joy as well as a little fame and a little money; but it alone could not have made me happy, I fear. No woman's life is complete without a husband and children, no matter what success the world may lay at her feet. I believe that will be true for you, Josie, and that some-

day, even though you may be a famous actress, you will find someone you will love and want to marry.

(There is a little silence. JOSIE is still turned away from Jo, but now she turns toward her impulsively.)

Josie. Aunt Jo, if I told you something—something dreadfully important, would you keep it and not call me a silly child? I mean——

(But she is interrupted by EMIL'S footstep and voice as he approaches U.C., and stands in the doorway there. JOSIE is startled and confused.)

Emil. Beg pardon for interrupting this weighty conference, dear ladies, but Bess insists that it is time for Dan to imbibe another glass of milk, and sent me for it. Of course, I could have gone straight to the kitchen, but I thought I'd peep in and see if little spitfire had changed her mind about the garden.

(He looks toward JOSIE quizzically.)

Josie. I'll take the milk to Dan.

(Without waiting for an answer, she darts out D.L. EMIL looks after her in perplexity, but Jo smiles as if she understood.)

Emil. (Shaking his head in a puzzled manner.) She hates me, doesn't she, Auntie? Acts as if I'd got the plague. I used to think I was her favorite hero.

Jo. Perhaps she doesn't like your treating her as if she were still a child, Emil. She isn't, you know.

Emil. (Gravely.) No, I know she isn't. But I—well, I guess I felt safer treating her as if she were still a child.

Jo. "Safer?" Whatever do you mean, Emil?

Emil. (Suddenly as impulsive as JOSIE.) You'll think me the craziest Jack that ever lived to sail the seven seas, but—I believe I'll tell you anyway. It's that—well, I'm in love with her, Aunt Jo. With Josie. Can you imagine that?

Io. How long have you known this, Emil?

Emil. Months. Somehow, when you're out on a ship with nothing but the blue water all about you, and dropping anchor only at strange foreign ports, you get to probing down into your own heart as you maybe never did before; and sometimes you find out queer things about yourself. Well, without my realizing for a long time just what it meant, I kept seeing Josie in my mind's eye, and hearing her voice and remembering things she'd said. But I knew jolly well there wasn't a chance of her feeling the same way about me, so since I've been back at Plumfield, I've tried to go on acting as if everything was as it used to be. But not only is her whole heart set on being an actress and going on the stage, but she seems to have taken a violent dislike for me—acts as if I were smallpox—so I guess the sooner I sheer off, the better.

(EMIL has been walking about between the easy chair where Jo is and the table D.L., but now throws himself into the chair at R. of the table.)

Jo. I shouldn't rush away too fast if I were you. Nor should I be in too great a hurry to make up my mind about Josie. Although she is no longer a child, she is still quite young, you know, and may not yet know her own mind and feelings.

Emil. I'd feel as if I were leaving port with a little fairer weather if only she didn't seem to think I was a—a nor easter.

Jo. Don't be impatient, dear. Life has a way of working out the greatest happiness for all of us, if we do our part well and have faith.

Emil. You are a great fellow, Aunt Jo. If you ever decide to stop being a landlubber, I'll take you round the world. When I have a ship of my own it is to be christened the "Jolly Jo," and you must come on as first mate. It would be regular larks to have you aboard.

Jo. I'll make my first voyage with you and enjoy myself immensely in spite of seasickness and all the stormy winds that blow. I've always thought I'd like to see a wreck, a nice safe one with all

saved after great danger and heroic deeds, while we clung like Mr. Pillicoddy to maintop, jibs, and lee scuppers.

Emil. No wrecks yet, ma'am, but we try to accommodate passengers. Captain says that I'm a lucky dog and bring fair weather, but we'll save the dirty weather for you if you want it.

(TEDDY'S VOICE is heard offstage R., and in a moment he appears at the door U.C.)

Teddy. Mother! Oh, Mother! More tourists!

(He dashes into the room.)

I say, there's a whole van of people coming up the street! You'd better escape while you can!

(Jo has jumped to her feet as soon as she has realized the news he has brought. The darning basket is knocked to the floor, and its contents scatter about. She stoops to pick them up, but things obstinately slip from her fingers.)

Jo. Oh, dear, I'll never get any work done!

(She, TEDDY, and EMIL are trying with vain effect and much bumping of heads to pick up the errant spools and socks. Laughingly.)

You pick up the darning, and tell my devoted public that I'm busy—or something! I'm going upstairs to work. Keep them out, Teddy!

(She hurries out U.L. and up the stairs. JOSIE comes in U.C.)

Josie. (Calling as she enters.) Aunt Jo—there's a crowd of people coming from the college, besides those in the van!

Teddy. I shall protect the poor lady—at the risk of my life!

(TEDDY runs out U.L. to keep vigil at the street door. EMIL is still pursuing the spools of thread, and JOSIE stoops to help him. They get tangled in the thread and get in each other's way. The murmur of VOICES may be heard from off L., growing steadily louder. EMIL and JOSIE speak in a con-

strained, unnatural manner, carefully avoiding each other's eyes.)

Emil. So you're to be a great actress some day.

Josie. Yes, I am—the greatest in the world!

Emil. Whew! You do aim high!

Josie. (After a moment.) You're leaving Plumfield soon?

Emil. Two or three weeks. Might as well. Everybody at old Plumfield is—well, interested in their own families and careers, and though they've all been generous and friendly to me, still there's nothing here that depends on me and that I feel really anchored to.

Josie. Will you—will it be long until you're back again?

Emil. That depends. A year or more, perhaps. Think the icicles might warm up a bit and melt by then, Josie?

(He is winding the thread over his hands awkwardly. At his question she looks up, startled.)

Josie. What—what do you mean, Emil?

(EMIL opens his mouth to answer, but there is suddenly the sound of many VOICES just outside, off L., as if the van had just deposited its passengers. Then TEDDY is heard, shouting above the noise.)

Teddy. (Off L.) Ladies and gentlemen!

(The noise subsides.)

It is with much regret that I inform you that the authoress, Mrs. Josephine Bhaer, is not visible today.

(There is a babble of VOICES.)

Voice. (Above din.) Why can't we see her? Where is she?

Teddy. (Shouting above the noise.) She's gone, I tell you!

Voices. Where's she gone?

Teddy. (Still shouting.) To—to Oshkosh for a rest cure!

CURTAIN

Act II, Scene 2

It is a week later, the night of the ball. There are bowls and vases of spring flowers about the room. Candles on the mantel-piece and piano are lighted and give a soft golden glow to the room.

When the curtain rises, DEMI is discovered pacing back and forth. He is in evening clothes, and his rebellious hair is plastered down flat, gleaming oilily. After a moment he stops suddenly, listens, then goes over to the arch U.L. and looks out. He turns back in disappointment. Just then the door U.C. opens; DEMI again starts in anticipation, but is again disappointed when he sees that it is JOSIE. She has several roses in one hand and large shears in the other.

Demi. Oh. It's you.

Josie. Who did you think it was—the spirit of the merry month of May or the ghost of Yankee Doodle? What an affectionate brother you are, Demijohn! There are countless ways you might have uttered that ejaculation. Now, for instance, gaily—"Oh, it's you!"

(She suits her tone and inflection to her description as she repeats DEMI'S words each time.)

Or affectionately—"Oh, it's you!" Or in pain—"Oohh! It's you!" Or dramatically—"Oh! It's you!" Almost any way would have been better than your brotherly recognition of my entrance.

(DEMI enjoys her performance.)

Demi. (Bowing in a courtly manner.) I beg forgiveness, mademoiselle.

Josie. It is granted—slave.

(She sniffs in the direction of his bowed head.)

Whatever is that horrible smell?

Demi. Horrible? Why, it's lilac! It's to make my hair lie flat. Aren't I handsome?

Josie. Whomever could you have been expecting when it was only I? Surely not—not Nan.

Demi. I thought perhaps—she did come here to dress for the ball, didn't she? I thought she might come downstairs a trifle early. To—to see about her medicine kit or something.

Josie. Why don't you marry Nan, Demi?

Demi. (Groaning.) Why don't I marry her! If only I could!

Josie. Did you ever ask her?

Demi. I try to, but she won't listen. She says she is never going to marry and cares only about her old pills and bottles.

Josie. (Thoughtfully.) You might break a leg. She adores setting bones . . . though, to me, the black plague is much more intriguing.

Demi. Dear little sister! Always so kind and helpful.

Josie. I'll be serious, Demi. I am fond of you and would like to help. I know that although Nan does scoff at romance and is very matter-of-fact and independent, really down in her heart she wants to be made love to. All girls do. You just haven't popped the question in the right way.

Demi. Since you are so wise, could you give me a hint how to "pop the question," as you so elegantly put it?

Josie. Oh, well, there are various ways, you know. In plays the lovers go down on their knees; but that's awkward when they have long legs. Ted never does it right, though I drill him for hours. You could say, "Be mine! Be mine!" like the old man who threw cucumbers over the wall to Mrs. Nickleby, if you want to be gay and easy. Or you could write a poetical pop. You have written them, I dare say.

Demi. Seriously, Jo, I do love Nan, and she must know it by this time. But I lose my head every time I try to tell her so, and

make a fool of myself. I thought you might suggest some pretty way. You read so much poetry and are so romantic.

Josie. Some new and brilliant way would appeal to Nan.

(They are both silent a moment, deep in thought. Josie sits on the sofa, chin in hand—with the shears sticking out in a precarious and ridiculous manner—her brow furrowed, her nose puckered. She surveys the room as if expecting to find a cue or even handwriting on the wall; her gaze comes eventually to the flowers in her hand. She jumps up in glee.)

I've got it! Perfectly lovely! It will touch her and will just suit you, being a poet at heart.

Demi. What is it? No ridiculous stunt, please.

Josie. I read in one of Miss Edgeworth's stories about a man who offered three roses to his lady—a bud, a half-blown, and a full-blown rose. If she wore the bud it would mean she loved him a bit, if she wore the half-blown she would even become engaged to him, and if she wore the full-blown rose that meant she would marry him right away. I don't remember which one the lady in the story wore, but it's a romantic way, and Nan knows about it, for she was here when I read it to the girls. I picked these roses to wear in my hair, but you may have three of 'em—the three nicest ones. And I'll slip them up into the room where Nan is dressing.

Demi. (After a moment's deliberation.) I'll do it.

Josie. (Jumping up and holding the flowers out to him.) Then choose the three flowers—a tight bud, a half-blown, and a full-blown! I'll tie my hair-ribbon on them, even though it is a new one, and you write a note to go with 'em.

(In selecting the bearers of his tender message, DEMI forgets that roses have thorns, and pricks his thumb.)

Demi. (Laughing ruefully.) Ouch! This must be the right one for Nan; it's so like her.

(He sucks his thumb.)

Josie. Give you another chance to claim her professional services, at least. Now, write the note.

(JOSIE takes the three roses DEMI has chosen, and lays the others on the table. While she arranges the flowers and ties them with her hair-ribbon, DEMI goes to the desk U.R., finds pen and paper and, with much pondering, writes.)

However in the world do boys manage to get along when they don't have sisters, I wonder. Want me to tell you what to write, too?

Demi. Thanks, I'll compose my own epistle.

(He finishes the note, folds it, and brings it to JOSIE, who now has the flowers tied with the ribbon.)

I am trusting you, Jo. This means everything to me. No jokes, dear, if you love me.

(Her quick light kiss on his cheek promises everything—or nothing. She sniffs at his hair again, puckering her nose; then, gathering up the remaining roses as well as the Cupid bouquet, she dances out of the room U.L. At the door she meets JO, who is coming in.)

Jo. Better hurry and dress, Josie. The orchestra is already tuning up in the ballroom, and the guests will be arriving any time now.

Josie. I'll be ready, Auntie.

(She runs out and up the stairs, and Jo comes into the room.)

Demi. Good evening, Aunt Jo.

Jo. Oh, hullo, Demi.

(She crosses to the doors U.C. and starts to open them. DEMI helps as soon as he realizes what she is about. The moon is shining, and the garden is dimly visible.)

Diana is kind to us tonight.

(DEMI looks out at the moonlight and sighs deeply.)

Maybe she will bring you good luck.

Demi. I don't think she likes me.

(Jo laughs, not unkindly. The DOORBELL rings off L.)

Jo. Gracious, there's someone now! I should have the front door open and be ready to receive my guests.

(She hurries to the arch U.L. and exits. DEMI paces about the room restlessly, fidgeting, stops at the piano and idly picks out, with one finger, the melody of the "Bridal Chorus." The door D.R. opens. It is DAN, a vivid figure in a brightly colored Mexican costume with a bolero and serape. He stands there a moment before DEMI becomes aware of his presence and stops his piano-strumming in embarrassment.)

Dan. Don't stop the music on my account, old fellow.

(He comes on into the room and sits in the easy chair D.R.)

Demi. Didn't know anyone was listening. I—I was just idling away the time till the ball begins. By jove, that's a dashing outfit you're wearing! Mexican?

Dan. Yes, I didn't have a dress suit and wasn't coming down for the ball, but Aunt Jo and the girls insisted that I wear this, so I gave in .

(The striking up of an ORCHESTRA in a waltz tune is beard off L.)

Demi. There's the music! Guests must be in the ballroom.

(Two or three figures are dimly seen strolling in the moonlit garden, beyond the doors U.C. NAN is about to enter, but stops short upon seeing DEMI and DAN.)

Nan. Oh—excuse me, gentlemen! (And she disappears.)

Demi. And me, also-will you, Dan?

(He rushes out in pursuit of NAN. At the same time that NAN makes her provocative exit, a shadowy white figure appears in the garden and approaches the doorway U.C. It comes nearer, and the moonlight gleams on the golden hair of BESS. She calls softly.)

Bess. Dan. . .

(He turns and looks as if he were seeing a vision; slowly he starts up from his chair and goes toward her, as she steps into the doorway.)

Dan. Why, Princess—I—I thought you were a spirit. It's the moonlight, I guess. You don't look real.

Bess. (Laughing softly.) I am, though. May I come in or am I disturbing your reverie?

Dan. Of course, come in.

(They move downstage.)

Sit here, and I'll sit at your feet and look at you.

(He speaks lightly now, and indicates the easy chair and bassock.)

Bess. You should be on the couch, and I should be playing your nurse.

Dan. (Gaily, but with an undertone of seriousness.) Not now. You're the Princess, and I—I'm your knight.

(He has led her to the chair and now seats himself on the hassock at her feet.)

Bess. Like Aslauga's knight in the story you asked me to read to you? I shouldn't have thought you'd care for that romantic tale, Dan. There is fighting in it, of course, but it is awfully sentimental.

Dan. I know. But I've read so few stories, I like the simple ones best. Sometimes, when I've been wandering about the West, I've had nothing but that little book to read. I guess I know it all by heart, and never seem to tire of those fighting fellows and the fiends and angels and lovely ladies . . . and the spirit with the golden hair always reminded me of you. . . .

(He suddenly leans forward. Intensely.)

Princess—don't be afraid—there is a story I must tell you . . . a true story. . .

Bess. (Not understanding at all.) Why, of course, Dan. Your stories are always exciting and adventurous.

Dan. But this is a different story—one I've never told before. (He hesitates, seeing the innocence of her face; and before he can decide to speak, LAURIE and JO enter from U.L., laughing together in their old spirit of comraderie.)

Bess. Oh, here's Father and Aunt Jo.

(DAN rises, the light in his face gone as suddenly as if a curtain had been rung down before it.)

Laurie. So-I've found my truant daughter!

Bess. Yes, Papa. Dan was about to relate another of his adventures in the great West; weren't you, Dan?

(Young MEN and WOMEN are seen strolling in the garden, blithesome ghosts in the moonlight; strains of MUSIC float at intervals from the ballroom off L.)

Jo. Your fond parent wishes to dance with you, so perhaps Dan will tell his story to me.

Bess. Of course, Papa. I'd much rather dance with you than with anyone else—and with Dan next.

(With a smile for DAN, she puts her hand on her father's arm, and they start out U.L. A COMMOTION is heard in the garden, and JOSIE, TEDDY, and several other BOYS and GIRLS crowd in through the doors U.C., chattering as they enter.)

Teddy. (As he comes in.) Of course I could play the part; it's really very simple. All you need is a balcony and a sword.

Josie. You'd muddle it, I know; but I do need practice.

Laurie. I think we'd better go before we find ourselves in the midst of a civil war, Daughter.

(And he and BESS exit, as TEDDY calls.)

Teddy. Better wait and see such a Romeo as there never was before! . . . Why, there's not even a balcony for you to fall down from, Jo!

Josie. (As she quickly surveys the room and her eyes light on the sofa.) We'll turn the sofa around, and I'll kneel on it and

just make believe I'm standing. Here-lend a hand.

(TEDDY and one of the other boys quickly turn the sofa around so that the back is toward the audience. Jo has sat down in the easy chair, with DAN beside her on the hassock. The other GIRLS and BOYS are grouped about, giggling and exclaiming at the antics of the two young actors.)

Now, I'm in my boudoir, and going out on the balcony.

(JOSIE goes back of the sofa, and kneeling upon it, leaning her arms on its back, she gazes out upon the imaginary scene with an expression of wistful tenderness. After a moment, she speaks dreamily.)

"O Romeo! Romeo! Wherefore art thou, Romeo?"

(TEDDY is D.L., blandly watching JOSIE'S performance. After a moment, the tender look on her face changes to one of annoyance as she turns to TEDDY.)

Now's your cue to come into the garden and see me!

Teddy. (Blankly.) Now?

Josie. Yes, now. See if you can catch it this time. (Again the wistful face and tones.)

"Romeo! O Romeo! Wherefore art thou, Romeo?"

(TEDDY falls to his knees just U.R. of the table, and clasps his hands in an attitude of prayer.)

Teddy. Do I use Italian dialect?

(JOSIE is exasperated; the others laugh.)

Josie. No! Talk like Shakespeare! Come, Teddy, please!

Teddy. But Romeo was Italian, wasn't he? So why shouldn't he talk like one?

(He declaims in a pseudo-Italian dialect, with violent gestures.)

It eesa my lady, oh, it eesa my lahv! She spiks, yet notheeng she say. So w'at?

Jo. (Putting her hands to her ears.) Teddy, stop! That's blasphemy!

(All except JOSIE are convulsed with laughter; poor JOSIE is too angry to speak for a moment. TEDDY rises.)

Teddy. Well, I just wanted to make it real.

Josie. For the last time, Teddy, will you behave sensibly and play the part?

Teddy. (With disarming contrition.) Yes, ma'am, I'll try. Do I come into the garden again?

Josie. Yes, and suppose you start at the first of that scene this time. You know the lines: "He jests at scars—"

(Once more TEDDY falls to his knees. He speaks the lines from Romeo and Juliet in a casual, monotonous manner which brings sighs from all.)

Teddy. "He jests at scars that never felt a wound.

But soft! what light through yonder window breaks? It is the East and Juliet——"

Say, why not let me do Macbeth? Now, there's a man for you!

(He scrambles to his feet and breaks out in thunderous tone.)

"Ring the alarum bell! Blow, wind! Come, wrack! At least we'll die with harness on our back!"

(He finishes with a mighty blow on his chest, and then looks around for acclaim, a fatuous grin on his face. JOSIE, the poor Juliet, has given up in despair and hangs limply over the balustrade of her balcony; but the audience is roaring. OTHERS have come into the room through the doors U.C. and U.L., and some are standing just outside, listening. Among them is EMIL, who now comes to JOSIE.)

Emil. (Plucking at her sleeve.) Don't you think Juliet should dance with me just once before she stabs herself?

(It is evident that JOSIE has changed the rôle she plays for EMIL; she is now the dangerous siren, looking up at him out of the corners of half-closed eyes, her lips puckered into what she hopes is a seductive pout.)

Josie. (In a husky, throaty voice, and with a pseudo-French accent.) It weel be a grreat pleasure, M'sieu—a grreat pleasure.

(He offers his arm, and she puts her hand upon it. They cross to the arch U.L., and exit, JOSIE looking up at EMIL soulfully and swaying languorously as she walks. EMIL is torn between laughter and affection. TEDDY has watched the transformation with gaping mouth.)

Teddy. (Pointing at Josie's departing figure.) Cleopatra, the temptress of the Nile! Poor Anthony!

(Some of the BOYS and GIRLS follow JOSIE and EMIL, others wander outside through the doors U.C. The door D.L. opens and DEMI enters, in each hand a plate of cakes. He looks about the room, apparently searching for someone. TEDDY turns and sees DEMI and hastens toward him, hands outstretched.)

Teddy. Demi-for me? How thoughtful of you!

Demi. (Holding the cake beyond his greedy reach.) Not so fast, my lad. More is to be had where this was procured—if you can subdue the dragon who guards the kitchen. Otherwise, you must wait until the refreshments are duly announced by the hostess.

Jo. (Rising.) Perhaps I'd better look into that now.

Teddy. I'll help you.

(She goes out D.L., with TEDDY close behind. The OTHERS, including DAN, wander off, talking together, either into the garden or through the arch U.L., across to the ballroom. Only DEMI is left, in the center of the room, holding his two plates of cakes. Suddenly NAN hurries in from U.L. In his surprise and joy DEMI almost drops the plates.)

Nan. (Stopping abruptly when she sees him.) Someone told me you were in here dreadfully ill with acute colic! I might have known it was only one of your childish jokes.

(She turns to go. DEMI crosses to her, gesturing with the plates in his hands.)

Demi. Please don't go away, Nan. I am ill—awfully. You must stay and do something for me or I'll—I may die! One never knows, you know. Death comes very suddenly sometimes, and tonight——

Nan. (Grimly.) What's your ailment?

(DEMI'S jaw drops as he tries to remember.)

Demi. (Lamely.) What—what's my ailment? Why, it's—it's—oh, I stuck a thorn in my finger! In my thumb, to be exact. I'll show you——

(He holds out the plate, realizes what he is doing, and manages to put the plates on the table. NAN sits in the chair at L. of the table.)

Nan. Let me see it .

(DEMI drops to his knees beside her and extends his left hand. She sniffs the air, and grimaces.)

Demi. See—there it is— (He realizes that it is the thumb of the right hand which has the thorn in it, and quickly withdraws his left and extends the other.) There!

Nan. (With a wilting look.) Are you quite certain it isn't your foot?

Demi. Oh, quite. I remember distinctly that it couldn't have been my foot, because at the time——

Nan. Keep still. Do you have a pocket knife?

(He digs in his pocket and brings out a knife which he opens and gives to her. She takes up his right hand and begins to dig around in a manner painful to behold; but the patient's countenance reveals only fatuous bliss.)

Am I hurting you?

Demi. Not a bit. Dig away-I like it.

Nan. I won't keep you long.

Demi. Oh, there's no hurry. Never so happy as here. So—so nice and cozy, don't you think?

(Quite unmoved by this tender remark, NAN fetches a pair

of large, round-eyed spectacles from her evening bag and puts them on.)

NAN. Now I see it. Only a thorn.

Demi. Yes, you see, I was gathering roses. To—put in the vases, you know.

(He waves vaguely about the room, which is innocent of roses,)

Nan. I see. . . . There, it's out.

(She rises abruptly, almost upsetting him, and holds out the knife.)

Demi. My hand is bleeding. Won't you bind it up?

Nan. Nonsense. Suck it. Only take care of it tomorrow if you're fooling around inkpots. Don't want any more blood-poisoning.

Demi. That was the only time you were ever kind to me—when I had blood-poisoning. Wish I'd lost my arm.

(He takes the knife and puts it in his pocket.)

Nan. I wish you'd lost your head; it smells like turpentine and kerosene. Do take a run in the garden and air it.

(She turns away.)

Demi. Now, Nan, wait a minute—I have something to say to you.

(The door D.L. swings open, and TEDDY enters, munching cake.)

Teddy. Still shouting the battle cry of freedom, Nan? Up with the flag! I'll stand by and lend a hand if you need it.

(He pops the last crumb of cake into his mouth and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand.)

Nan. You're always a great comfort, Teddy, and I'll call on you in all emergencies. I like men who come out frankly and own they are not gods. See them sick, as I do, and then you know them!

Demi. Don't hit us when we are down. Be merciful and set us up to worship you forevermore.

Nan. We'll be kind to you if you will be just to us. I went to a suffrage debate in the state legislature last week. And of all the silly, feeble, vulgar twaddle I ever heard, that was the worst! And those men were our representatives! I want an intelligent man to represent me if I can't do it myself, not a fool!

(In the indignation which any reference to woman suffrage arouses in NAN, her voice has grown louder, and several BOYS and GIRLS have crowded into the doorway U.C., listening. TEDDY turns and motions them to come in.)

Teddy. Nan is on the stump! Come on in. We men must stand together, for we're in for it!

(They enter, talking and laughing. DAN, EMIL, and JOSIE are among them.)

Emil. Avast, avast, here's a squall to wind'ard!

(They all laugh and talk at once. LAURIE and BESS enter U.L. Immediately the noise quiets, as it always does in the presence of "the Princess.")

Laurie. What is the excitement?

Teddy. Nan is on an independence-for-women rampage, and we men are to be tried for our lives. Will you preside at the bar of justice, Princess?

Bess. I'm not wise enough. I'll sit here and listen.

(And she sits in the chair at the L. of table, with her father standing back of her chair. TEDDY places the footstool as a "stump," and urges NAN upon it. She grins good-naturedly and mounts. She still wears the spectacles.)

Teddy. Here's a stump for you! Hop onto it.

All. Speech! Speech!

Teddy. (Pounding on the table.) Now, madam, free your mind!

Nan. I have only one thing to say: women were created free

and equal with men. (Applause.) And they have a right to vote, and also to be perfectly free and independent and live their own lives!

(All the GIRLS applaud. DEMI groans.)

I want to ask every boy and man here what you really think on this subject. Commodore, you first. Are you ready for the question?

Emil. Aye, aye, skipper.

Nan. Do you believe in woman's suffrage?

Emil. Bless your pretty figger-head, I do, and I'll ship a crew of girls any time you say so. Aren't they worse than a press-gang to carry a fellow out of his moorings? Don't we all need one as a pilot to steer us safe to port? And why shouldn't they share our mess afloat and ashore, since we are sure to be wrecked without 'em!

Teddy. Good for you, Commodore! Nan will take you for first mate after that handsome speech!

Nan. Now, Dan, you love liberty so well yourself, are you willing we should have it?

Dan. All you can get, and I'll fight any man who's mean enough to say you don't deserve it!

Nan. Demijohn Brooke, come into court and tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!

Demi. (Facing her and solemnly raising his left hand.) I believe in suffrage of all kinds, I adore all women, and will die for them at any moment if it will help the cause!

(All appland.)

Teddy. Strike up the band! The enemy surrenders! Your scarf for a flag, madam.

(He lifts the scarf from NAN'S shoulders, and, as he does so, a rose falls from the folds where it has been concealed. NAN sees it, gives a shriek of dismay, and flies out the door U.C. DEMI pounces upon the rose with joy.)

Demi. It's my rosebud! She loves me!

(And he turns and follows NAN in hot pursuit. The others laugh.)

CURTAIN

Act III

It is a morning two weeks later. It is foggy and dark outside; graying light filters through the drawn curtains at the windows and doors which open upon the garden. Gradually, however, the fog clears and finally bright sunshine streams in from outside.

Because it is so dim, a lamp is lighted on the desk U.R., where Jo is seated, writing. A moment after the curtain rises, there is a KNOCK off L., and almost immediately NAN enters U.L. Her medicine kit is in her hand. Jo rises to meet her.)

Nan. 'Morning, Aunt Jo.

Jo. Good morning, Nan. Muggy outside, isn't it? I hope you don't catch cold.

Nan. Takes more than a little fog for a husky animal like me. I like it.

Jo. Sit down, won't you?

(She motions toward the sofa, and sits on one end of it herself.)

Nan. Thanks, but I haven't long—on my way to see a patient. (She has dropped her bag on the piano bench, but does not sit down.)

Thought I'd drop in if you weren't too busy for a little chat.

Jo. Never too busy for you, Nan. Something bothering you?

Nan. (With a short, embarrassed laugh.) Well, rather. Sort of a mess I've got myself in. Hardly know how to get out, and thought you might lend a hand.

(She perches on the arm of the chair R. of table.)

Jo. You haven't gone and operated on someone who turned out to have measles, I hope!

Nan. Nothing so bad as that—no. I suppose if I were the romantic sort, I'd say that this matter had to do with the heart.

Jo. You mean yours?

Nan. No. Haven't got any, I guess. At least it doesn't behave in such a way that it makes me aware I've got it. It thumps along steadily, supplying blood for my veins, but that's all.

Jo. (Smiling.) And you want it to do more?

Nan. That's the problem. I don't. But I was silly enough to make the mistake of thinking I did, and now I'm in a jam. Remember the night of the Commencement ball?

(She rises, aimlessly picks up a paper from the table, fidgets with it.)

Jo. Of course. And you wore the rosebud Demi sent you?

Nan. Yes, that's it. Somehow the ball went to my head for a little while, and with all the other girls excited over beaus and dances, I—well, I guess I sort of lost my real self for a while. And I wore Demi's rose, and then when it dropped from my scarf and he saw it, of course he thought it meant I cared for him.

Jo. And you don't?

Nan. Not the way he wants me to—not the way the rosebud meant. And I don't know what to do. I can't go on letting him believe what isn't true, but I hate terribly to hurt him. He really is a dear boy, and I shouldn't plague him as I do.

(She walks restlessly over to the fireplace.)

Jo. There is only one thing to do. Tell him the truth. It will sober him, perhaps, and help him to settle down as he needs to do.

Nan. I never dreaded anything quite so much. Oh, why did I make such a stupid blunder?

Jo. All of us are made the fools of our own impulses sometimes, Nan. And perhaps this was really a prophecy of a lasting sentiment yet to come.

Nan. No-not ever, Aunt Jo! I know that, without any doubt now. My whole life must go into my work. Helping people to

get well is romance enough for me. And I know that in time Demi will meet and fall in love with some sweet girl who will need him and make him the sort of wife he deserves. I never could.

Jo. Then the sooner you tell him that, the better, my dear. And you may have your opportunity this morning, for I expect Josie to stop in on her way to Amy's house, and Demi will likely accompany her.

Nan. Josie is to interview that—that Miss Cameron—or whatever her name is—the great actress, isn't she?

Jo. Yes, her appointment is for ten o'clock; it's a quarter of now.

Nan. There is another career woman for you—Josie. She will be a great actress some day, don't you think so?

Jo. There is much in Josie's heart besides her desire to act. She hasn't your determination and self-reliance, Nan.

Nan. Sometimes I almost wish I hadn't so much myself. Then again I wouldn't trade my profession for all the housewifely joys in the world! Why do you suppose I was such a silly fool that night at the ball? I haven't the courage to face Demi.

Jo. (Laughing gently.) Allow yourself some of the normal weaknesses of the feminine nature, my dear. And when Demi comes and you talk with him, tell him in your usual straightforward manner. He will respect you and admire you all the more for it. And perhaps you will be able to find a joy in comradeship which you have never had before.

Nan. I hope so—truly I do.

(There is a KNOCK off L.)

Jo. That must be Josie now.

Nan. If Demi is with her, send him to the study, please, Aunt Jo. I'll-wait there.

(She exits D.R. JOSIE'S voice is heard calling "Aunt Jo!" and then the door U.L. opens before JO can reach it. JOSIE

is there, and just behind her in the ballway, MEG and DEMI.)

Jo. Good morning. Why, good morning, Meg. It is damp for you to be about so early.

Meg. (As she removes the clothing she mentions.) I wore my rubbers and a cape over my shoulders. Summer fogs aren't very dangerous, anyway.

(DEMI hangs the cape on the rack in the hall for her, and they move on into the room. JOSIE has already entered.)

Josie. She was really too excited to stay at home, Aunt Jothough of course she won't admit it.

Jo. Come, sit down, Meg.

(She leads MEG to the couch, and they both sit.)

Nan is in the study, Demi. I think she'd like to have a little consultation with you.

Demi. (His face brightening.) She would? Say—that's jolly! She—I mean, that's jolly, isn't it?

Jo. Then run along.

(He goes toward door D.R.)

Josie. Wish me luck, Demi.

Demi. (Turning back to ber.) You know I do, little sister. As wonderful luck as seems to be coming my way at last—but I still think you'll be happier in a kitchen than on the stage!

(He pinches her cheek mischievously, then exits D.R.)

Jo. Aren't you due for your interview with Miss Cameron in a few minutes, Josie?

Josie. Yes—I must go, in a minute. Mother thought up an excuse to come this far. I forget what it was now, but it was pretty flimsy.

Meg. Don't listen to the child. I wanted to look through that old trunk of Marmee's which you have in your attic, to find a quilt pattern she used to have. I don't have it, so I'm sure it must be there.

You'd better hurry along. It's only five minutes.

Jo. Perhaps it is, Meg. You may look. But stay here and get your breath first.

(JOSIE walks about, unable to keep still. MEG takes from her bag the sewing she always has handy.)

Josie. What do you suppose she will say, Aunt Jo? Did you think I was very bad last night?

Jo. Why, it seemed to me that the play went very well except, of course, for the balcony's tumbling down on Romeo's head.

(They laugh at the memory.)

We were afraid for a moment that he and Juliet had met an even more untimely death than Shakespeare intended.

Josie. (Ruefully.) I have a bruise or two to remind me.

Jo. Has it been decided what is to happen in the event Charlotte Cameron gives a favorable opinion of your talents?

Josie. Mother has promised that-

Meg. Now, don't overstate my promise, Josie. I only said that, in that case, I would *consider* your going on the stage. I didn't say I would approve.

Josie. But if you really considered it, you would be bound to see that that was the only thing left for me to do. If I really have talent, I mean.

Meg. I still believe, and shall always believe, that a woman's place is in the home, and that she finds her greatest talents in being a good wife and mother.

Josie. (Resolutely, but with a catch in her voice.) I shall never marry! I shall never fall in love—not ever!

Meg. (Smiling complacently.) That is what you think now. But when you grow up—

Josie. (In anguished tones.) Mother!

Jo. (Looking at the watch she wears pinned on her bosom.)

Josie. Oh, dear, I mustn't be late. (She rushes out U.L.)

Meg. (Calling after her quickly.) Put your rubbers back on, Josie, and take your umbrella. It may rain.

Josie. (From the hallway.) All right, Mother, but I hate rubbers!

Jo. So do I. And it really isn't going to rain, Meg.

Meg. Sh! She's trouble enough without encouraging her rebellious nature.

(JOSIE appears in the doorway, rubbers on, umbrella in hand.)

Josie. I'll wager I look like an actress! Well, wish me luck.

Jo. (Rising to go across to her, and offering her hand in a hearty manner.) Here's luck, Josie—a world of it—no matter which way the tide turns.

Josie. (Giving her a quick, searching look, and speaking in a low, earnest voice.) You—you do know, even without my telling you, don't you, Aunt Jo? And understand?

Jo. I think I do.

Josie. Bless you! Good-bye, Mother.

Meg. Good-bye, dear. And-and good luck.

(JOSIE runs across the room and kisses her mother lightly on the cheek.)

Josie. Bless you, too-you dear. Be back soon as it's over.

(And she is gone, through the arch U.L. There is the sound of the outside DOOR, off L., closing after her.)

Meg. If Charlotte Cameron encourages her to go on the stage, I shall have to consent, I suppose. Though I should hate to give up a daughter of mine to a life so full of hardships and temptations. I don't know why Josie couldn't have been satisfied to wait until some nice boy comes along, and settle down.

Jo. She may have more of the housewifely virtues and longings than you suspect, Meg.

83

(She resumes her seat beside MEG.)

Meg. Well, I hope so. Children are such a problem, though I don't know what I should do without them.

Jo. If I had more than one like Teddy, I don't know what I'd do with 'em. Although my adopted boys and girls have brought me just as many problems as if they were my own, I suppose. Still, I love them dearly, and want them to feel free to come to me with their troubles and their ambitions and dreams.

Meg. Are both Dan and Emil planning to leave soon?

Jo. Yes, within a few days. I've been lying in wait for them here this morning. I want to have a good talk with each one before he leaves. I am expecting Dan back any minute now. He went for one of his long tramps in the woods this morning.

Meg. In spite of his rough ways, Dan is a good boy, Jo. It's too bad he is going back into that wild country in the West. A little polish would make a gentleman of him.

Jo. It wouldn't be safe, Meg. Work and the free life he loves will make a good man of him, and that is better than any amount of polish with the dangers an easy life in the city would bring him. We can't change his nature—only help it to develop in the right direction.

(There is the sound of FOOTSTEPS off L.)

That must be Dan now.

Meg. I'll go up to the attic and give you your chance.

(As she rises, DAN appears in the arch U.L.)

Good morning, Dan. It's a wet morning to be walking.

Dan. I like it. Feels good to have the fog against your face. 'Morning, Mother Jo.

Jo. Hullo, my boy. Leave your wet jacket and come in for a chat.

Meg. I'm going upstairs to look for that pattern, Jo.

Jo. Very well. I'll help search if you don't find it.

(MEG goes out U.L., and up the stairs. DAN has taken off his wet mackintosh and has run a pocket comb through his hair. Now he comes into the room, stopping L. of the table.)

You need a rest after your long tramp; you must be tired.

Dan. But won't I disturb you?

Jo. Nonsense! I'm always ready to talk; shouldn't be a woman if I were not. (Rising.) Sit down. (After a step or two toward door D.L.) We'll combine business with pleasure. Mary will be pleased if I pare the apples for the pies she's going to make. (On way to kitchen.) Be right back.

(She goes off D.L. DAN sits in the chair back of the table. Almost immediately he appears lost in thought, and, drawing out a small pendant which he wears on a heavy silver chain concealed about his neck, he opens it and gazes at its contents earnestly and longingly. JO'S returning step causes him to close the case quickly and slip it back into its hiding place. She reënters, carrying one empty pan and one filled with apples. She comes down to sit at the R. of the table.)

Getting restless again, Dan?

(She drops the apples from one pan to the other as she pares them.)

Dan. Maybe a little. Yet somehow I'm not so anxious to cut loose as usual.

Jo. (Smiling.) You are beginning to get civilized. It's a good sign, and I'm glad to see it. You've had your swing and want a change. Hope the farming will give it to you, though helping the Indians pleases me more. It is so much better to work for others than for one's self alone.

Dan. You're right. And I seem to want to root somewhere and have folks of my own to take care of. Guess I'm tired of my own company, now I've seen so much better. I'm a rough, ignorant

lot, and I've been thinking maybe I've missed something, loafing around creation. Maybe I should have gone in for education as the other chaps did, huh?

Jo. No, I don't think so in your case. So far, I'm sure the free life was best. Time is taming my wild colt, and I shall be proud of him, whether he makes a pack-horse of himself to carry food to the starving, or goes to ploughing as Pegasus did.

Dan. Glad you think so. The fact is, it's going to take a heap of taming to make me go well in harness anywhere. I want to, and I try now and then, but always I kick over the traces and run away. Lately, here at Plumfield, I've felt more content than ever before—so maybe you'll finally tame me, ma'am.

Jo. Dan. . .

Dan. (After a moment's silence.) Yes?

Jo. There is something I feel I must tell you before you go away . . . though it's hard.

(His eyes, their honest gaze straight upon her face, do not make it easier for her to speak.)

One day, while you were ill, I was watching beside your bed. You moved in your sleep, and that little case you wear on a chain around your neck—it fell out from your clothing and came open. I closed it and put it back, but . . .

Dan. (Quietly.) You saw the picture?

Jo. Yes.

Dan. And know what a fool I am?

Jo. Oh, my boy, I am so grieved.

Dan. Don't worry about me. I'm all right. Glad you know, though I never meant to tell you.

(He looks away from her.)

Of course it is only a crazy fancy of mine, and nothing can ever come of it. Never thought there would. Good Lord! What could the Princess ever be to me but what she is—a sort of dream that's sweet and good?

Jo. It is very hard, dear, but there is no other way to look at it. You are wise and brave enough to see that, and to let the secret be ours alone.

Dan. I swear I will! It was almost too much for me once—the night of the ball, when she came in from the garden, looking like a kind of spirit in the moonlight, and called my name. . . But I was saved from telling her then, and I swear that there will never be another look nor word.

Jo. (Anxiously.) She didn't guess, then?

Dan. Oh, no; her face was innocent as an angel's. No one guesses, and if it troubles no one, is there any harm in my keeping this (*indicating the case*) and taking comfort in the pretty fancy that's kept me straight in the wild country out there?

Jo. Keep the picture, and tell me about the "fancy." Since I have stumbled on your secret, let me know how it came and how I can make it lighter to bear.

Dan. It happened out there in the wilderness. . . (He rises and paces back and forth as he talks.)

So many times I didn't see another human soul for days, and lying under the stars at night, somehow they seemed to turn into her shining hair . . . and then I wasn't so lonesome. . . . Then, other times, when I was in a wild prospectin' town and was tempted to gamble and carouse with the other fellows, I'd take out the little picture, and her eyes would be looking so straight and honest at me—— I guess I sound like a fool, but those thoughts and things helped me through; they are all solemn true to me, and I can't let them go. The dear, shiny head, the white gown, the eyes like stars, and the sweet calm ways that set her as high above me as the moon in heaven.

(He grips the back of the chair and looks earnestly into Jo's eyes.)

Don't ask me to give it up! It's only a fancy, but a man must love something, and it's better for me to love a spirit like her than any of the poor common girls who would care for me. Jo. (After a moment's silence.) Yes, Dan, it is wise to keep this innocent fancy, if it helps and comforts you, until something more real and possible comes to make you happier. I wish I could give you a little hope, but . . . you and I both know that there isn't any. We both know the place Bess has in the hearts of her father and mother, and that the most perfect lover they can find will hardly seem to them worthy of their precious daughter. Let her remain for you the high, bright star that leads you upward and makes you believe in heaven.

(The sag of DAN'S shoulders reveals the hope he had cherished in spite of himself and which is now gone. He smiles wearily and his voice is tired when he speaks.)

Dan. You are right. I've known that all along, but I guess I sort of let my imagination get the best of me. . . . Anyway, there's nothing for me now but to clear out. The sooner, the better. Back to the Indians and sheep-herders and prospectors, and to the other bums like me. That's where I belong.

(There is no self-pity in his voice; only a dull realization of what he must forever be denied.)

Jo. (Rising quickly to place both hands on his shoulders and to turn him toward her.) Remember, dear, if the sweet girl is forbidden you, the old friend is always here to love and trust and pray for you.

(His arm goes about her shoulders in a quick embrace.)

Dan. I can never forget that, for she's been like a real mother to me—God bless her!

Jo. And keep you, my boy.

Dan. I'm going upstairs to pack my things. You will say goodbye to all of them for me, won't you? I'd rather not have any any fuss made over going.

Jo. Of course, if that is the way you want it to be.

(MEG appears in the archway U.L.)

Meg. Excuse me, Jo, dear. I simply cannot open that old trunk in the attic. I pulled and pried, but it won't budge.

Dan. I'll open it. I'm on my way upstairs anyway.

(And without looking back, he strides out and up the stairs.)

Meg. (Calling after him.) Oh, thank you, Dan! (Then to Jo.) Did you give him his lecture, Jo? I didn't like to interrupt, but I was so tired from tugging at that trunk, and I do want that pattern.

Jo. It's quite all right. Dan and I had finished our little conference.

Meg. He has grown to be quite a handsome man, hasn't he? I shouldn't wonder if lots of girls have admired him, in spite of his crude ways. It's odd he hasn't got himself married, isn't it?

Jo. Yes. . . I suppose it is.

Meg. Oh, well, of course there is plenty of time yet.... I wonder what Nan had to say to Demi that takes so long. They are still in the study, aren't they?

Jo. Yes, they haven't come out yet.

(PROFESSOR BHAER enters from U.L., having come downstairs.)

Professor. Ah, good morning, Sister Meg.

Meg. Good morning, Fritz.

Professor. (Going toward the desk U.R.) Iss the morning paper here, mein lieb? I did not read it at breakfast today.

Jo. It is there, on the desk, dear.

Meg. Demi wrote one of the editorials in this morning's paper—something against women and children having to work in the factories. It's there, Fritz, on the middle page.

(But the PROFESSOR'S eye has already fallen on one of the

despised stories.)

Professor. Ach, here it iss again! This very day I go to

the editor and tell him no longer to send his paper to this house! "The Revenge of Dora the Dairy Maid"—ach, such trash!

Meg. (Meekly.) I—I read one of those stories once, Fritz, and thought it had a good moral.

Professor. (Scarcely hearing her.) Perhaps Demi might talk with the editor and persuade him not to publish more of these—these "The Revenge of Dora the——" Ach!

Meg. I'll speak to him of it, Fritz.

(There is the sound of the outer DOOR off L. being opened, then EMIL sticks his head in the door U.L.)

Emil. Ahoy, me hearties!

Jo. It's a wet morning for a landlubber such as you've got to be, Admiral.

(He is taking off his mackintosh and cap and hanging them on the hall rack.)

Emil. But it's clearing fast and will be fair sailing in an hour.

(And indeed a brighter light is streaming through the windows and door U.C. than at the first of the scene.)

Jo. It is lighter. We don't need the lamp now.

(She blows out the lamp on the desk, and pushes back the curtains at the windows to let in the light.)

Emil. (Now coming into the room.) Top o' the morning, Aunt Meg. 'Morning, Uncle.

Meg. Good morning, Emil.

Professor. Good morning, Nephew. I am glad thou hast come, for I haf been vishing to talk vith thee.

Jo. So have I. Poor lad, you're in for it! But we can't let our boys go away without a last heart-to-heart talk. Come, Meg, we shall go up and find that pattern, and leave these two men together.

(She rumples the Professor's hair affectionately, and she and Meg go out U.L. and up the stairs.)

Professor. Vell, my boy, soon thou vilt be leaving us again? Let us sit down.

(He sits in the easy chair R. EMIL turns the chair R. of table around and sits astride it, resting his arms on the back.)

Emil. Expect to leave port in a couple of days, sir.

Professor Ve shall be sorry to haf thee go. Thy Aunt Jo and I, ve are proud of all our boys. But it makes our hearts to ache when they go away from Plumfield.

Emil. A few weeks here, and I'm almost a landlubber myself, sir.

Professor. This long voyage vill gif thee new experiences and, being now an officer, thou vilt haf new duties and responsibilities. Power iss a dangerous thing, my boy. Be careful that thou dost not abuse it or let it make a tyrant of thee.

Emil. Right you are, sir. I've seen plenty of that, and have got my bearings pretty well, I guess.

Professor. There is a book I vant to gif thee, Emil, to take and read often. It is on the shelf there (*indicating the shelf above the desk U.R.*)—the poems of Schiller which I myself translated into English. Take it; it is thine to keep.

(EMIL goes to the bookshelf to find the book.)

It is thine in memory of thy mother, my dear sister. In it thou wilt find much beauty and much understanding of the ways of men.

(He is interrupted by the opening of the door U.C. to admit JOSIE and BESS. The skies have cleared so that the opened door lets in pale sunlight now. JOSIE'S cape is across her arm, and she carries her rubbers and umbrella. Disappointment is written across her face and in the droop of her shoulders. BESS follows her silently.)

Josie. (In a small, dismal voice.) Oh—good morning, Uncle.

Bess. (With her usual graciousness.) Good morning, Uncle Fritz.

Professor. (Rising.) Good morning, my dear young nieces. You haf been out early in the garden.

(JOSIE has gone half way across the room toward the door U.L. without seeing EMIL, who now turns from the bookshelf.)

Emil. Josie—have you been to see Miss Cameron? What did she say?

(JOSIE starts at the sound of his voice. Immediately she straightens up and assumes a rôle of gaiety, too gay for complete conviction, in fact.)

Josie. Oh, hello, Emil. I didn't see you there. Yes, I have been to see Miss Cameron, and she told me—she told me that I was the—the most wonderful ingénue she had ever seen on the stage! She said it would be a great loss to the American theatre if I neglected my talent, and that I must join her company for their tour of the South and West. She won't take no for an answer!

(BESS is obviously dumbfounded at this report of the interview, but remains silent, gazing at JOSIE in bewilderment.)

Emil. (Trying to be congratulatory, but not succeeding very well.) Why—why, that's splendid—perfectly splendid! Congratulations! By the time I heave in port again you'll be a famous actress.

Josie. (A catch in her throat.) When—when will that be? Emil. A year, perhaps. Maybe more.

Josie. By then I'll be—I'll be the greatest actress in all the world—greater even than Charlotte Cameron or—or Bernhardt or anybody.

(Half-crying, half-laughing, JoSIE runs from the room and upstairs. JO and DAN have come downstairs just before JoSIE's last speech, stopping in the hallway for a moment. They may be seen, talking quietly, as DAN sets down his shabby rawhide satchel. They turn as JoSIE runs past them, then come on into the room. The others are looking after her in bewilderment.)

Professor. The child iss too much upset. It iss not good for her.

(BESS has seen DAN'S bag in the hall and notices the battered hat in his hand She speaks in a voice which causes DAN'S face to light up for an instant, but no longer; for pain dims the light, and he turns so that no one may see the truth in his eyes.)

Bess. Why, Dan-are you going away?

Dan. (*Trying to speak jovially*.) Yes, Princess. The old wanderlust, you know. Time to shove along to start that farm. Been an invalid long enough for a roughneck like me. Thanks for playing nurse.

(Without looking at her, he crosses to PROFESSOR BHAER and holds out his hand.)

Good-bye, Professor.

Professor. Good-bye, my son. May the Lord bless thee and keep thee safe.

Dan. Thank you, sir. So long, Emil.

Emil. (Gripping his hand.) So long, old fellow. Good luck.

Dan. (Crossing to where BESS is waiting, near the door U.L., and taking both her hands in his.) Good-bye, Princess. If we—if we never meet again, remember your old friend Dan sometimes, won't you?

Bess. (Warmly.) How can I help it, when you make us all so proud of you? God bless your mission and bring you safely back home to us!

(She looks at him with such frank affection and regret that he cannot resist the impulse to take her "dear goldy head" between his hands and kiss it; then, with a broken "Goodbye," he hurries abruptly out of the room. Jo follows, putting a hand on his arm. He may be seen in the hallway as he picks up his bag, gives Jo a quick kiss on the cheek and is gone. The others have stood silent, looking after him. There is a puzzled expression on BESS's face, as if she had felt in DAN'S kiss and good-bye something heretofore unknown.

Jo, quickly returning, sees the troubled look on the girl's face.)

Jo. Forgive him, Bess. He—he has had a great trouble, which you know nothing of, and it makes him tender at parting with old friends. For you know he may never come back from the wild world he is going to.

Bess. (Innocently.) You mean the accident at the mine?

Jo. No. dear. A greater trouble than that. But I cannot tell you any more—except that he has come through it bravely, so you may trust and respect him, as I do.

Bess. (Slowly.) Oh. You mean that he has lost someone he loved. Poor Dan. We must always be very kind to him.

Jo. Yes, my dear. Very kind.

Bess. (As if seeking to escape from the strange emotion she has felt.) I—I think I must go now. Mother will be expecting me. (She turns to go out U.C. Jo goes with her.)

She will be sorry Dan has gone.

Jo. Good-bye, dear.

Bess. Good-bye.

(And she slips out U.C. JO turns back into the room. PROFESSOR BHAER and EMIL have been looking for the Schiller, but now turn D.R., EMIL with the book in his hand. The PROFESSOR resumes his place in the easy chair. EMIL now motions toward the sofa as he speaks to JO.)

Emil. Come aboard and make yourself at home, Auntie. Uncle Fritz and I were getting along toward a good chat when—when Josie came in, and then Dan.

(Jo takes the place he indicates, and he sits beside her.)

Jo. It will be lonesome without you, Commodore. I'm sorry you're leaving us.

Emil. Well, you don't pipe your eye and look squally when I sheer off as you used to, and that's a comfort. I like to leave port in fair weather and have a jolly send-off all round. 'Specially

this time, for it will be a year or more before we drop anchor here again.

Jo. You have salt water enough without my adding to it. I'm getting to be quite a Spartan mother and send my boys to battle with no wailing, only the command, "With your shield or on it."

Professor. I vas telling Emil how proud ve are of him, and how great iss the responsibility now he iss an officer.

Emil. I shan't have a very wide swing, with Peters over me, but I'll see that the boys don't get abused when he's bowsed up his jib.

Jo. That sounds mysteriously awful. Might one inquire what nautical torture "bowsing jibs" is?

Emil. Getting drunk. Peters can hold more grog than any other man I ever saw. He keeps right side up, but is as savage as a norther and makes things lively all round. I've seen him knock a fellow down with a belaying pin, and couldn't lay a hand. Better luck now, I hope.

Professor. Thou hast proved thyself a good sailor; now be a good officer, which iss a harder task.

Emil. I'll do my best. I know my time for skrim-shander is over, and I must steer a straighter course. But don't you fear—Jack ashore is a very different craft from what he is with blue water under his keel.

(TEDDY enters from U.L.)

Teddy. Ran into Dan down the street. Didn't know he was hitting the trail so soon.

Jo. I'm glad you saw him, dear. He hated to leave without saying good-bye, but left messages with me.

Teddy. Wish I were going with him out West. . . . Father, Professor Jenkins wants some sort of papers you were preparing for him. Asked me to bring 'em back over to the college right away.

Professor. Ah, yes. I should haf sent them already. I think-

yes, on the desk in the upstairs study I left them. Wouldst thou fetch them for me, my son?

Teddy. Of course, Father.

(As he starts out U.L., he runs into JOSIE.)

Oh, hullo, Juliet! When do you make your début?

Josie. Let me by.

(JOSIE slips past him into the room. He goes on upstairs. JOSIE crosses to the C. of the room. Her hair is tumbled and it is evident that she has been weeping. Her words rush out all on one breath.)

It wasn't true what I said—I made it all up! She said I was a good amateur, but I didn't have any real talent, and I'd better forget about going on the stage and—and learn to keep house.

(She finishes in a plaintive wail, and with a sob rushes out U.C. into the garden. EMIL has listened to her confession with an amazement which turns to joy.)

Emil. Josie! Josie, you little idiot—wait for me!

(And he follows her, unaware of the smiles which JO and the PROFESSOR exchange.)

Professor. Emil likes the little tomboy, yes?

Jo. They have been in love with each other for some time, but have talked at cross-purposes. I was sure it would all work out happily for them by and by.

(TEDDY reënters U.L., with a sheaf of papers which he takes to the PROFESSOR.)

Teddy. Here are the papers, Father. Where did Josie vanish to? And Emil? Say, Mother, they aren't—

(The Professor has adjusted his spectacles to look over the papers which TEDDY has given him. He frowns in perplexity, looks more closely.)

Professor. (Interrupting TEDDY.) Vhat iss this, Ted? Mein Gott, from vhere did this come? "The Revenge of Dora——"

Jo. (Springing up.) Teddy! What have you done? That isn't the right paper!

Professor. (Rising.) Vhat iss the meaning of this, Josephine? This iss the story in the newspaper. Vhy—vhat iss it doing here, in manuscript, like this?

Jo. (Very quietly.) I wrote the story, Fritz. I wrote all of them.

(She turns and walks away from him.)

Professor. Jo-vhat does this mean?

Teddy. Mother! Were you—was it you Julie Thorpe's father was talking about—who wrote the stories for money to—to pay doctor bills? Mother—are you ill?

Professor. (Going to Jo and turning her about to face him.) Jo, vhat does this mean? Vhat haf I done to thee, heart's dearest?

Jo. It is nothing to worry about, truly it isn't. The doctors did find something rather seriously wrong with my heart, and insisted I must have a special kind of treatment and consultations with specialists. There wasn't enough money, so—I dashed off those silly stories in my spare time, and paid the bills. Now I am practically well . . . and this was to be the last story. I'm sorry, Fritz. I know how terribly disappointed in me you must be.

Professor. (In anguished tones.) My dearest, do not say such things! Vhat a brute I haf been—how deeply I haf wounded thee! Nefer can I forgif myself.

(He turns away D.R., shaken by his discovery.)

Teddy. But, Mother—are you—are you really and truly better now?

Jo. Much, much better. All the doctors say that there is no further danger, and nothing for anyone to be troubled about.

Teddy. What a lot of selfish beasts we have been!

Jo. (Patting his shoulder comfortingly.) Of course you haven't been any such thing. There was no need to worry you. And now it is all past.

(Through the doors U.C. come EMIL and JOSIE, hand in hand and beaming blissfully upon each other and the world.)

Teddy. (Turning and staring at them.) Jo!

Josie. Where's mother, Aunt Jo?

Jo. She's still upstairs.

Teddy. Josie—listen!

Josie. (Crossing toward U.L. to call toward the stairs—EMIL still holding fast to her hand.) Mother! Mother—come down—hurry!

Teddy. (Beseechingly.) Josie, you can't desert your old pal. Think of all we've been through together!

Meg. (Off L., as she descends the stairs.) Josie—Josie, what did she say? Did she—

(As MEG appears in the archway U. L., Josie runs to her and seizes her.)

Did she—did she say you must go on the stage?

Josie. Oh, no, Mother, she said—— Oh, Mother, I'm going to be married!

(MEG is bewildered. EMIL steps up to her.)

Emil. And so am I, ma'am! Isn't that a jolly state of affairs?

Meg. You- Why, whatever-

Teddy. Isn't it dreadful? They're in love.

Emil. With each other.

Josie. Isn't it wonderful!

(She and EMIL have MEG between them now, each with an arm about her. She is still bewildered, but pleased.)

Meg. I—I can't quite believe it, but it's perfectly splendid.

(The door opens D.R., and NAN and DEMI enter, pausing to stare at the trio across the room.)

Demi. What is this? A part in a new play?

Teddy. Love conquers all—and don't tell me that you two are also in the cast!

(Attention is now centered on NAN and DEMI, D.R.)

Demi. No—we've learned about something better. From now on, you may observe a perfect friendship, guaranteed never to shrink nor wear out! Right . . . friend?

(He turns to NAN.)

Nan. Right!

(They smile into each other's eyes. The others are obviously pleased at this turn of affairs. Jo and the PROFESSOR have sat down on the couch, and the PROFESSOR is tenderly holding both her hands in his own. TEDDY hovers back of them.)

Teddy. Well, that's jolly! I'm glad some of us are still sane. (Noticing the lover-like pose of JO and the PROFESSOR.)

Why, here's another awful flirtation on the sly!

(Again the center of attention is shifted, this time to JO and PROFESSOR BHAER.)

Jo. May joy like this be ours forever!

CURTAIN

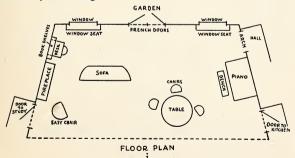
APPENDIX

LTHOUGH, as the title implies, the story of this play is concerned with the lives and problems of Jo's boys—her own and those she has taken under her wing—as Miss Johnson has adapted her material, there is not a preponderance of men characters in the play, and, in fact, the parts are well balanced between men and women. This means, of course, that you will find no particular casting problem worthy of the name in connection with Jo's Boys.

Since sincerity and simplicity are the keynotes of the story, it is not necessary to strive for sophistication in any sense of the word, either in characterization, costumes, or setting.

Setting

Although a hallway U.L. is desirable, as indicated in the stage diagram, it is not necessary; and if the director prefers, such stage business as takes place in the hallway may be brought into the room, with very little change.



Inasmuch as the style of Victorian furniture is revived from time to time, there are always a sufficient number of pieces to be found in every locality to provide the necessary atmosphere.

Costumes

The same is true of costumes. Costumes for the period of 1881 will be found in any number of attic trunks, and in some communities the production of a period play of any kind is the signal to unearth all old dresses and suits of any period and align them for a style show.

However, if costumes are not forthcoming in this way, you will see in the costume illustrations that the styles of the present lend themselves to alteration sufficiently to suggest the period. An extra flounce here or there, a few gathers or folds achieved by merely raising the skirt on one side and fastening with a few tackings of thread, and all this over an extra layer of petticoats gives the desired effect.

The costumes illustrated here are merely to suggest the style. Other characters in the play will, of course, be dressed in similar mode, varying in plainness or decoration as the character or scene indicates.

Nan, for example, will wear plainer dresses than Bess, or even Josie. Amy, who has always liked elegance, will wear more fashionable and rich-looking clothes than either Meg or Jo. The designs in the illustration need not be followed exactly, if other styles of the period are available.

Characterization

For those who may wish to make more of a study of the characters in the play, ample background material will be found in the original story of *Little Women* and of *Jo's Boys*.

APPENDIX



Josie



Teddy





Amy



Jó



Professor Bhaer

Hand Properties

ACT I

ON STAGE

darning basket containing socks, thread, etc. (Jo) embroidery (Meg) drawing board, paper, and pencil (Amy) two plump, long, folded manuscripts (Jo, from desk U. R.)

BROUGHT ON

copy of Romeo and Juliet (Teddy, from U.L.) large leather medicine kit containing pills, pad of paper, and pencil, etc. (Nan, from U. L.) trays with tea service (Jo and Teddy, from D. L.) newspaper (Demi, from U. L.) various bundles containing a string of coral beads for Josie, a dainty necklace for Bess, an inkstand in the shape of a bear for Jo, a lace cap for Meg, a small picture in a gilt frame for Amy, and a pair of skull-shaped earrings for Nan (Teddy, Emil and Josie, from U. L.) telegram (Teddy, from U. L.) glass of water (Demi, from D. L.)

ACT II, Scene 1

ON STAGE

breakfast service (on table D. L.) newspaper (Professor, on table D. L.) stack of mail (Jo, on table D. L.) darning basket (Jo, on desk U. R.)

BROUGHT ON

brief case and books (Professor, from D. R.) feather duster (Teddy, from D. L.)

drawing of Jo (Esmeralda, from D. R.) cane (Dan, from U. L.) blanket (Bess, from U. L.) medicine kit (Nan, from U. L.)

ACT II, Scene 2

ON STAGE

pen and paper (Demi, on desk U. R.) pocket knife (Demi, in suit pocket)

BROUGHT ON

roses and shears (Josie, from U.C.)
hair ribbon (Josie, from U. C.)
two plates with cake (Demi, from D. L.)
evening bag containing large bone spectacles (Nan, from U. L.)
rose in scarf (Nan, from U. L.)

ACT III

ON STAGE

watch (Jo, pinned to dress)
morning paper (Professor, on desk U. R.)
copy of Schiller translation (Professor, in book shelf U. R.)

BROUGHT ON

medicine kit (Nan, from U. L.) sewing in sewing bag (Meg, from U. L.) rubbers, umbrella, and rain cape (Josie, from U. L.) pocket comb (Dan, from U. L.) pan of apples, empty pan and paring knife (Jo, from D. L.) pendant locket on chain (Dan, from U. L.) rain cape, rubbers, and umbrella (Josie, from U. C.) shabby rawhide satchel, battered hat (Dan, from U. L.) sheaf of manuscript papers (Teddy, from U. L.)

Date Due

5-28-5



U812,5

PLANE CRAZY

By Dorothy Rood Stewart



5 M. 7 W. for main cast. 3 M. 6 W. as extras.

BOOKS, 75 Cents

One of the best comedies of family life in recent years.

Royalty on request.

THE VERY LIGHT BRIGADE

By KATHRYN PRATHER



8 M. 7 W. Good opportunity for extra girls.

BOOKS, 75 Cents.

A decided hit throughout the nation.

Royalty on request.

ROW, PETERSON & COMPANY

Evanston, Illinois

NEW YORK

LOS ANGELES

"And Laughter Holding Both His Sides"

SECOND FIDDLE, BY GUERNSEY LE PELLEY

It is remarkable how much trouble a fellow can get into when he allows himself to be persuaded into staging a wedding rehearsal—with someone besides the bride-to-be. It looked innocent enough, for the officiating gentleman was none other than Wilbur, the butler. But, by a quirk of the state law, the marriage was legal! What happens after that makes Second Fiddle one of the most-enjoyed and most-played farces in the business. 3 M. 6 W. Books, 75 cents. Percentage royalty.

THE CUCKOO'S NEST,

BY H. STUART COTTMAN AND LEVERGNE SHAW

The authors of Submerged, the world-renowned short play, have contrived in The Cuckoo's Nest one of the prize joy carnivals of recent years.... The Cragwells—like the cuckoo—find themselves a nest and move right in. Of course, it was a complete accident. They were merely taking refuge from an irate taxi driver when it happened, and having no money to pay the fare—no money to go anywhere—when they find a furnished house, vacant and for rent... well, why not accept the momentary good fortune? We said, "momentary." It's really a swell farce. 6 M. 5 W. Price, 75 cents. Percentage royalty.

BEGINNER'S LUCK, BY GLENN HUGHES

Four leaves from the Falls City Four Leaf Clover Club—the leaves being four personable young ladies—go to Greenwich Village determined to make names for themselves in the field in which each thinks she has talent. But the girls have not figured on the mysterious Mr. X., nor on his ability to interest a famous opera star, an art critic, a literary agent, and a theatrical director in the talents of four struggling young artists. What people can blunder into with just beginner's luck! 7 M. 8 W. Price, 75 cents. Percentage royalty.

MISTAKES AT THE BLAKES',

BY GUERNSEY LE PELLEY

Tom and Gary Blake are just wondering what new excuse to offer the belligerent landlady, when Lawyer Carter appears with the startling news that the boys are the recipients of an inheritance from an eccentric uncle. Tom's share is \$50,000, and Gary's share is Charlie, whom they recall as the uncle's faithful sheep dog. Gary thinks Tom has all the luck. But when Charlie turns out to be a beautiful young lady with considerable charm and fortune, Tom thinks Gary has all the luck. . . . Dizzy complications arise—they'd have to, with such people in the offing as Ducky Lucky Larson and her prize-fighter brother, Billikins . . . and Mrs. Greengas, a nervous boarder . . . and Mrs. Pinkle, employed by the Bruce Home for Feeble Minded. Le Pelley at his best. 6 M. 7 W. Price 75 cents. Percentage royalty.

Order from Row, Peterson and Company, Evanston, Illinois; or 131 E. 23rd St., New York 10, N. Y.; or 1233 South Hope Street, Los Angeles 15, California.